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THE PUBLICATIONS OF  
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XXXIV







THE  
PUBLICATIONS OF  
THE CHAMPLAIN  
SOCIETY

ALEXANDER BEGG'S RED  
RIVER JOURNAL AND OTHER  
PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE  
RED RIVER RESISTANCE OF  
1869-1870



TORONTO  
THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY

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ALEXANDER BEGG (1839-1897)

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This portrait appears in line reproduction in the *Canadian  
Illustrated News*, October, 1879, p. 233.

ALEXANDER BEGG'S  
RED RIVER JOURNAL  
AND  
OTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO  
THE RED RIVER RESISTANCE OF  
1869-1870

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
W. L. MORTON  
*Professor of Canadian History at the University of Manitoba*

TORONTO  
THE CHAMPLAIN SOCIETY  
1956



TO THE MEMORY  
OF  
JOHN LESLIE JOHNSTON, LL.D.  
PROVINCIAL LIBRARIAN  
OF MANITOBA  
FRIEND AND COUNSELLOR  
OF ALL WHO LOVED ITS HISTORY

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MAP BY J. S. DENNIS OF RED RIVER AND THE SURVEYS OF 1869	<i>facing page 1</i>
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## PREFACE

**T**his volume was prepared to make available, in the first instance, the journal kept by Alexander Begg in Winnipeg from November 16, 1869, to July 23, 1870. The journal consists of the day by day entries of an acute and curious observer at the centre of events, who was even a participant in some of the events recorded, and sympathetic in varying degrees with all the parties concerned except one, the Canadian party led by Dr. John Christian Schultz. As such, the journal is a basic document of the study of the Red River troubles of 1869. It was extensively used by A. S. Morton in his *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, but was apparently not resorted to by G. F. G. Stanley in the preparation of *The Birth of Western Canada*. Begg later made his journal the basis of his *The Creation of Manitoba*, which was published in 1871. That book has been generally regarded as the best contemporary account of the Red River troubles; and it remains an indispensable source. As *The Creation of Manitoba* is now somewhat rare, the publication of the journal both reinforces the authority of that work, and also helps to make its substance more readily available.

Much of the value of the journal derives from Begg's practice of copying into his daily entries the text of documents of the day. He did so with painstaking care; and where his copies can be checked with the original, accuracy of a high degree is proved. Some of the documents of the troubles, indeed, were preserved only by Begg's assiduity as a copyist, and have been made public in *The Creation of Manitoba* and his other major historical work, *The History of the North-West*. It seemed desirable, therefore, as space permitted, to print with the journal other contemporary documents which Begg would have been delighted to copy, had they been available, and some which he did include in *The Creation of Manitoba*. The hope is that the whole makes a volume of interest and

substance on the events of the year which saw the North-West united with the Dominion of Canada.

Of the writing of Begg's journal little is known. Begg was a natural journalist, quick to note and swift to record. It may be conjectured that when the Red River troubles began, he saw a journalistic opportunity. He began to write long "letters"—really special correspondence—to the *Globe* of Toronto signed with the pen name of "Justitia". The first of these appeared in the *Globe* on December 2, 1869, and consisted of an account of the causes of the disturbances. The present writer's belief that Begg was author of the "Justitia" letters, which were the subject of much interest in Canada at the time, began when similarities were noted between the journal and some of the later letters. It was confirmed by two pieces of evidence. One is the passage in the journal of February 20, when Riel searched the mails, where Begg notes that one piece of mail was a "Justitia" letter directed to Dr. Thorburn of Toronto. The other piece of evidence is a note in the Alexander Ross Papers in the Public Archives of Manitoba in which Begg asks Dr. Thorburn to deliver an enclosure to the *Globe*. The evidence is not perfect; but it puts the question of Begg's authorship beyond reasonable doubt.

It may have been that Begg, already an author, sensed at once that the disturbances of the fall of 1869 were going to be of considerable significance before their consequences were worked out, and were therefore worth more than passing comment, or this conviction may have come some time later. At any rate, he began his journal on November 16, the day the November Convention met to discuss the then circumstance and future course of the Red River Settlement. Begg then wrote, if he had not already written, an introduction to the journal which surveyed the events of the past year, and sought to explain the causes of the disturbances of 1869. In short, it would seem that the journal was planned, not as a mere record of events, but as the substance of a future book.

It is interesting to note that a friend of Begg's in Red River, J. J. Hargrave, secretary to Governor William Mactavish, already had in manuscript his own journal and history of the



Red River Settlement, which was in 1871 published under the title of *Red River*. Hargrave had also seen the approaching transfer of the North-West as an opportunity to write for the Canadian public, and had obtained an appointment as special correspondent of the *Montreal Herald*. His articles, two of which are reproduced below, Hargrave later offered to his publisher as a supplement to *Red River*, but without success. Possibly the two young literary gentlemen made their plans together.

The text of the journal printed below is a copy of the two manuscript volumes in the Public Archives of Canada. Whether these are the original as kept day by day is not certain. No sign of later correction or emendation has been detected within the text. The text, however, is written in a firm, even-flowing hand, with practically no corrections or erasures, which suggests a copy, but which was probably only the effect of Begg's quick and vehement mind, which was not reflective and not meticulous in choice of language.

Marginal corrections were made by Begg; but these are usually verbal, not factual, and presumably were made after the journal was terminated. There are also comments in the margin by other hands, presumably those of readers who were also eye-witnesses of the events. All have been reproduced, and identified as being either Begg's or another's.

The journal was sold to the Public Archives of Canada in September, 1894, by Begg himself, who was at that time in Toronto. Its history between 1870 and 1894 is unknown, but it is to be presumed that the journal was in Begg's possession during that time.

The journal, whether originally planned as such or not, became the basis of *The Creation of Manitoba*. Many pages of the journal are reproduced *verbatim* in the book, but passages that deal with personalities or impute responsibility are deleted or re-written in impersonal and general language. To the documents copied into the journal are added a number not published in Red River at the time, but printed in the Bluebook of 1870, cited below as *Sessional Paper* No. 12. Some further documents are included below, namely Nos. xi, xxiii and xxv, which were printed, or reprinted, either in the *Sessional Paper*,

the *New Nation*, or separately but not copied by Begg into the journal or reproduced in *The Creation of Manitoba*. Begg published as much of the journal as was discreet, and added to it some important documents of the troubles not available in Red River at the date of his journal entries. What was lost then, and is regained now, was not only his direct attribution of responsibility for the disturbances, and his statement of motives in the journal, but also much lively and circumstantial detail, and a number of minor characters of a certain interest, such as Jimmy-from-Cork and Captain Gay.

This brief description of the main component of the present volume must be completed with a briefer biographical note on its author. Alexander Begg was born in Quebec City on July 19, 1839, of Scottish parents, Alexander and Mary Urquhart Begg. He was educated at St. John's, Quebec, and Aberdeen, Scotland. He returned to Quebec and entered on a career in business. In 1867, as the agent for certain firms of Hamilton, Ontario, he went to Red River, where he introduced Canadian goods for the first time. This sort of enterprise was typical of Begg, always a promoter. He liked Winnipeg, and set up as a trader and as the first express and steamboat agent Winnipeg had known. In 1868 he became a partner of A. G. B. Bannatyne, postmaster, trader, and son-in-law of Andrew McDermot, the first of the free traders of Red River. The partnership signified that Begg, a Canadian, had been accepted into that circle of old Red River traders which the Hudson's Bay Company tolerated, and the members of which disliked the newer, aggressive traders, of whom Dr. John Christian Schultz was chief.

Begg was thus established in Red River; and in 1868 he married, at Hamilton, Ontario, Katherine Glenn Macaulay Rae, who was, through her father, a second cousin of Lord Macaulay, the historian, and through her mother, a niece of Dr. John Rae, the Arctic traveller and explorer. Mrs. Begg was in Winnipeg during the winter of 1869-1870, and is mentioned in the journal.

After 1870 Begg remained in business in Winnipeg until 1877. In 1871, besides *The Creation of Manitoba*, he published "*Dot-it-Down*"; *A Story of Life in the North-West*, a tale which

embodies much satirical comment on the life and personalities of Red River, the latter being disguised by readily penetrable pseudonyms. In 1879 appeared his *Ten Years in Winnipeg*, a chronicle of the growth of the city, written with W. R. Nursey. During these years Begg became more and more interested in journalism. From 1872 to 1874 he published the *Manitoba Trade Review* and the *Gazette and Trade Review*. In 1873 he became editor of the *Daily Nor'Wester* and in 1877 of the *Daily Herald*. From 1877 to 1884 he was in the public service of Manitoba as Sergeant-at-Arms of the Legislature, Queen's Printer, and Deputy Treasurer and Auditor.

Begg was active in many aspects of the life of Winnipeg in those formative years. He took, for example, a leading part in the organization of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba.

In 1884 he became Immigration Agent for the Canadian Pacific Railway, and spent four years at this work in London, England. While there he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Statistical Society.

Begg left the employ of the Canadian Pacific Railway and went to Seattle in 1888. There he entered journalism once more. In 1892 he removed to Victoria, British Columbia, where he edited the *Victoria Daily News*. When that paper failed through no fault of his, Begg wrote his *History of the North-West*, which appeared in three volumes in 1894-1895, a history of great value and in parts still an authoritative work. In 1895 Begg began what proved to be the last of his many ventures, the *British Columbia Mining Record*, which he edited until his comparatively early death in his fifty-eighth year on September 6, 1897.<sup>1</sup>

For publication with the journal thirty-two documents have been selected. The Red River troubles gave rise to much official publication at the time, and in subsequent years down to 1879 with reference to an amnesty for Louis Riel, Ambroise-Didyme Lépine and W. B. O'Donoghue. Much private correspondence, and other private material, appeared at the time, or has been revealed since. The press of the day also

<sup>1</sup> For most of the above details I am indebted to M. Wolfenden, "Alexander Begg versus Alexander Begg," *The Northwest Bookshelf* (P.A.B.C., 1937).



printed what must be considered a great deal of material on the North-West, and on the disturbances and their aftermath. To select to best advantage from such an amount and variety of material has not been easy; and it would be idle to expect that the selection printed below could not be held deficient or mistaken in one respect or another. The task of selection was also complicated by the fact that the Red River troubles were a matter of fierce controversy when they occurred, and have been a subject of warm feeling and differing opinion since. The difficulty of achieving a fair and balanced selection was, on one hand, eased by the generally impartial tone of Begg's journal, but aggravated by the relative scarcity of contemporary material from the hand of Riel or other French writers. Much of what there is, such as Riel's own writings on the events of 1869-1870, the "Memoirs" of Louis Schmidt, or the articles of Joseph Dubuc to *La Minerve* from Fort Garry in the summer of 1870, were written after the event and are explanatory or defensive. A serious effort has been made to include the most significant French documents; and these are printed below in the belief that they state the motives and objects of the *métis* with some explicitness. It is not necessary to discuss here the provenance and source of the French documents included, since this has been indicated in the notes. Something must be said here, however, of the choices made. Riel's "Notes of the November Convention" are, of course, of significance as the first-hand notes of the leader of the *métis* when the decision to establish a provisional government was made. His "Historical Memoir" is Riel's considered and elaborated defence of his course in the troubles. Both are fundamental to the documentation of the events of 1869-1870 in the North-West. Schmidt's "Memoirs" are neither as immediate nor as authoritative, but they do supply additional information and insight, and constitute the fullest and most serious statement of the viewpoint of the leaders of the *métis*. The letters of Dugas and Taché are primary documents on the causes of the disturbances and the complications caused by the shooting of Thomas Scott. The manifestos and proclamations printed separately, together with those copied by Begg in his journal, are, so far as is known to date, a complete set of the main public documents published

by the leaders of the Resistance. The most important document not included in the volume is the report of the debates of the Convention of Forty. The debates were published in the *New Nation*, January 28, 1870 and weekly thereafter. The short extract from Abbé Dugas's *Histoire véridique du mouvement des métis* is printed as a statement of the clergy's and Riel's prime purpose,—the preservation of the French element in western Canada. No comparable statement of what was perhaps the prime purpose of the *métis*, the preservation of their "nation" on a block of land exclusively their own, was found, unless it be Riel's somewhat rambling letter of April 19, 1870, to Abbé Ritchot, which is cited in part.<sup>1</sup>

The official documents in English have been included to supplement those in the journal, and because some of them, although already in print, are not of such easy access as to justify their omission from the volume. The newspaper despatches were chosen for the degree to which they supplemented or confirmed the journal, and the various letters in order to include the views or sentiments of important participants in the events of 1869–1870, or of points of view not otherwise expressed. It seemed desirable, for example, to hear J. S. Dennis, William McDougall, Dr. Schultz, and a Red River "loyalist" speak, as well as to have Bishop Machray's considered judgement of the causes of the disturbances.

The material to be found in the Canadian newspapers and British periodicals contains much factual information, and some good descriptive writing. Only some examples have been included; and the limitations of space, which even a volume of generous size imposes, have caused much to be pruned away which it would have been a pleasure to include.

Every effort has been made to reproduce the authentic text of the journal and the supplementary documents. Wherever the reading was doubtful, the emendation, when attempted, is indicated in square brackets. Only two liberties have been taken: one is in the punctuation of the journal. Begg's main punctuation mark consisted of a dash (—), which served as

<sup>1</sup> See p. 137, n. 1.

comma, semi-colon or period, as well as a dash. It has been replaced by the appropriate punctuation, except where the use of the dash actually reflected the sense. The other is that the accents of some of the French documents, both because of hurried composition and of the lack of a font of French type in Red River, were wholly lacking or irregularly used. These documents have been printed with the correct accents.

Proper names proved to be a problem. Begg obviously picked up by ear some of those he entered in his journal; for example, that of William Coldwell, which he reproduced as Colville. The practice adopted with respect to English proper names has been to note Begg's error, give the correction, and thereafter correct the spelling in the text. With respect to French proper names, about the spelling of some of which there is still uncertainty, the practice adopted has been to note the approved spelling at the first occurrence, but to leave Begg's version unaltered. In general, the attempt has been to furnish the reader with the authentic text, but not to annoy him with repeated errors in the original or trivial editorial emendations.

The task of preparing this volume for the press has not been carried out without much assistance and many kindnesses generously done. I have to thank Professor Marcel Richard, of the University of Manitoba, who patiently checked my translations of the French text, and Professor W. M. Conacher, late of Queen's University, who in a final revision subjected them to the proof of his finished scholarship. I gladly acknowledge the service of friendship rendered by my colleague, Professor R. G. Glover of the University of Manitoba, who criticized the Introduction with a severity that only friendship could dare, or bear. And to Professor D. G. Creighton of the University of Toronto I owe a valuable footnote, an obligation for which I here return thanks, as well as for the opportunity of discussing with him some aspects of the interpretation of the events of 1869-1870, both in Red River and in Ottawa.

It would be graceless and invidious to express degrees of gratitude; but I cannot suppress a special glow when I recall the help given in a field where it was particularly needed, that



of the names and relationships of the *métis* who appeared in the journal and the documents. Monsieur L'Abbé Pierre Picton of St. Boniface gave of his accumulated knowledge and his valuable time without stint in the task of identification; and in so doing he revealed to me that web of blood relationship which not only held the *métis* together, but bound the two halves of the Red River Settlement with ties that were not to be disregarded. This is a debt which quite literally cannot be repaid, and I can only hope that I have transmitted his loving scholarship unimpaired and undiminished.

In the same work of identification I received much help from Dr. A. A. d'Eschambault, President of the St. Boniface Historical Society, Miss Anne Henderson, Vice-president of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba, Mr. Clifford P. Wilson, Editor of *The Beaver*, and the Reverend T. C. Boon, Archivist of the Diocese of Rupert's Land; and I thank all these my colleagues in the Council of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba.

If my researches and editorial labours required so much help, it was not for want of assistance given while I was pursuing my inquiries. The Social Science Research Council of Canada and the University of Manitoba made possible a leave of absence for one year. The staffs of the Public Archives of Canada, the Public Archives of Manitoba, the National Archives of the United States of America, the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress, of Queen's University Library, of the Minnesota Historical Society, of the Pennsylvania Historical Society, of the Archives of the United Church of Canada, gave me every assistance in their power, and often led me to sources of which I was unaware. Like all searchers, I received help and consideration beyond the call of duty, and share the general feeling of the inadequacy of thanks thus expressed.

Grateful acknowledgment is made of the kind permission of the Governor and Committee of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company to read the Red River in-correspondence of 1869-1870, and to reproduce from it the letters of Governor William Mactavish printed as Nos. vi and xvi below, and to use the footnotes cited as being from the Company's Archives.









## INTRODUCTION

A prendre les choses comme vous les prenez, je sais que vous me condamnerez. Mais si vous vous mettiez à mon point de vue, il n'en serait pas ainsi.

—Words attributed to THOMAS SCOTT when he was asked if he had anything to say at his trial at Fort Garry.<sup>1</sup>

### I

THE Resistance<sup>2</sup> of the *métis*<sup>3</sup> of Red River in 1869 to the transfer of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory to the Dominion of Canada, without the people of those territories having been consulted, was in itself a small thing. The spectacle of a few hundred armed men claiming control of the North-West was as comic as it was startling; and many of the episodes of the Resistance were as farcical as they were perilous. But the Resistance of the *métis* was an event of major significance at the time, and its consequences were momentous for the future. Involved in its course and outcome were the relations of half-breed and Indian with the white immigrant in the North-West, and the relations between French and English, their language and institutions, in one-third of Canada, and this affected also their political relations in Old Canada. Involved also was the question as to whether the North-West

<sup>1</sup> "Looking at things as you do, I know that you will condemn me. But if you were to see things from my point of view, you would not do so." P.A.M., *Le Métis*, April 25, 1874.

<sup>2</sup> The term Resistance is used deliberately. Not only was it frequently employed at the time; it also possesses the merit of describing precisely the spirit and intent of the actions of the *métis* in 1869-1870, without resorting to the legally accurate but nevertheless misleading term "rebellion". The opinion advanced in this Introduction is that Riel and his followers did commit acts of rebellion, but did so in the belief that they were both morally and legally justified.

<sup>3</sup> This word will be used to describe the population of mixed blood in Red River which was French by speech and Roman Catholic by faith.



was to be Canadian or American; and within that was the more important question whether, in the face of a United States stretching from Alaska to Florida, old Canada would be able to maintain its independence. Red River was the key to the North-West, the North-West to the future of the new Dominion; and in October, 1869, Louis Riel and his followers seized and held that key to win for themselves and the people of the North-West guaranteed rights as civilized men. Their error was not so much that they risked rebellion, as that they used this great lever to exact what in due course would have been generously given.

If they used means disproportionate to their ends, however, the ends were neither ignoble nor mistaken. The half-breeds claimed as their birthright the civil and political rights of British subjects. This they were entitled to do, for they were civilized men, their leaders educated, the main body of the people simple and honest folk, intelligent, if illiterate. That the majority of the *métis* of Red River were hunters and freighters did not make them nomads. The long contest between nomadism and settlement was being ended on the whole in favour of the latter.<sup>1</sup> The colony was their settled abode, and in the farther North-West were new Red River Settlements in the making. To describe Red River as a frontier is to use a term of such general application and of so little local relevance as to possess slight scientific value.<sup>2</sup> By 1869 Red River had had a government, courts, churches and schools for nearly fifty years. It had become a civilized society, largely of mixed white and Indian blood, it is true, but civilized by every

<sup>1</sup> See Marcel Giraud, *Le métis canadien* (Paris, 1945), Livre II, chaps. I, VI and X, for a discussion of the struggle between nomadism and settlement. Giraud's exhaustive study does not altogether support the statement made above. It is made in the writer's belief that the tendency was towards an ending in favour of settlement. The tragedy of the *métis* of Red River was, as Riel was aware, that their evolution away from nomadism was incomplete in 1869.

<sup>2</sup> The disagreement with G. F. G. Stanley's Introduction to *The Birth of Western Canada* (London, 1936) expressed here is based on the belief that it is an error to treat the fur frontier of Canada as identical with an agricultural or pastoral frontier. What the *métis* chiefly feared in 1869 was not the entrance of the agricultural frontier of Ontario into Red River—and they would have welcomed that of Quebec—but the sudden influx of immigrants of English speech and Protestant faith.

test except that of self-government; and that test in no forced sense of the term it could also meet. Red River was not a frontier, but an island of civilization in the wilderness. It was the offspring of the fur frontier, which was not, as was the agricultural frontier, a conflict of civilization and barbarism, but a partnership of trader and native. Of this partnership, the *métis*, or French half-breeds, were the offspring; and the colony of Red River was, in virtue of its part in the extended fur-trade of the North-West, a community unique both in history and character. The *métis*, one half of its people, were unique also in that they thought of themselves as a "new nation", a "peculiar people", as Riel termed it. Neither French nor Indian, but intermediate, they claimed to unite the civilization of their fathers' with the rights of their mothers' people in a new nationality of the North-West. The "new nation" was a unique ethnic and political reality, sprung from the continental fur-trade; and it was not unaware both of its uniqueness and of its dependence on the old way of life, and also of its need to adapt itself to the changes which had been foreseen for at least a decade before 1869.

It is in this sense of nationhood of the *métis* that an understanding of the Resistance of 1869 is to be found. They sought guaranteed rights as a community of civilized people. The Canadian government was entirely ready to grant the normal rights of British subjects to all civilized individuals in the North-West, without respect to race. But it had no idea that it was dealing with a corporate entity, a "nation" by sentiment and by their own claim. It is in this conflict between the half-articulated demand for *corporate* rights by the *métis*, and the intention of the Canadian authorities to grant *individual* rights in due course, that the true character of the Resistance is to be found.

It was therefore the "new nation" of the *métis* which was the central and dynamic protagonist of the Red River Resistance: dynamic because they acted first and dared to act alone; central because all other actors in the events either opposed the action of the *métis*, or attempted to guide that action to ends of their own. These other elements were active and influential, and to comprehend the course of events of

#### 4 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

1869-1870 it is necessary to view them in their mutual relationships.

The governing factor in those events was the approaching transfer of the North-West from the government of the Hudson's Bay Company to that of the Dominion of Canada.<sup>1</sup> The transfer had in view a movement of immigrants into the North-West, and the settlement of the country. The great division of opinion in Red River therefore was between those who favoured the transfer and those who feared its consequences.

To the latter group belonged the *métis* who, as will be shown below, feared not so much the transfer as the means and agents by which it would be carried out. But as well as the *métis*, those who doubted the benefits or opposed the consummation of the transfer included the Roman Catholic clergy, the local officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the American traders and residents of the village of Winnipeg. Each of these groups had some reason to be doubtful of the consequences of the establishment of Canadian authority in Red River. The clergy of the Church of Rome were still essentially missionary clergy, although St. Boniface was the seat of a bishopric covering the North-West, and the older French settlements of Red River were organized in regular parishes. The clergy and members of the Order of the Oblates of St. Mary Immaculate had worked heroically at a twofold task: the evangelization of the Indians, and the restoration of the faith and of French culture among the *métis*. Both sides of this work had been greatly advanced. Growing missions among the Indians extended from Baie St. Paul on the Assiniboine to the Mackenzie, and in the French parishes and missions of Red River a great part, probably a majority, of the *métis* of the North-West had fixed abodes and were members of parish or missionary churches.<sup>2</sup> It seemed almost certain that by far the greater part of the *métis* could be won to the faith and to a settled life in a few more years, to be the cornerstone of the faith and of French culture in the new North-West.

<sup>1</sup> See A. S. Morton, *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71* (Toronto, 1939), chap. XI, for an authoritative account of the negotiations leading to the transfer.

<sup>2</sup> See A. G. Morice, *Histoire de l'église catholique dans l'ouest canadien du lac Supérieur au Pacifique* (Winnipeg, 1912), II, chap. IX.



The task, however, was yet unfinished. The clergy, and especially their leader, Bishop Alexandre Antoine Taché, O.M.I., feared that a sudden immigration of farmers from Ontario would disrupt the work of the missionaries and expose their hitherto sheltered charges to the pressures and temptations of a secular, commercial and callous Anglo-Saxon civilization. Their fears were neither groundless nor exaggerated. To note that it was the common dilemma of the missionaries of the nineteenth century, as of civil servants of the twentieth, to prepare their charges for the advent of civilization and to fear its approach, is not to belittle the perplexity and anxiety with which Bishop Taché and his clergy viewed the coming of the transfer. Nor is it to be suggested that they refused to face the inevitable. They knew that civilization would some day throw open the North-West. They merely hoped for more time to prepare for the change. But the transfer now proposed confronted them with the possibility, indeed the certainty, of a sudden inrush of British Canadian land-seekers from Ontario before the *métis* had finally abandoned the wandering life of hunters and tripmen and settled down as farmers in the parishes of the Red and the Assiniboine. So much was this expected onset of British Canadians the cause of the missionaries' anxiety, that there were not wanting those who said, though mistakenly, that the Roman Catholic clergy would have preferred annexation to the United States rather than annexation to Canada. This was simply because the Americans would have had to occupy northern Minnesota before they reached the Red River, while the Canadians, crossing perforce the barren Precambrian Shield, would arrive directly and quickly in Red River.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Taché, like many old residents of the North-West, was convinced also that the possibilities of agricultural settlement in the North-West had been much exaggerated by advocates of the annexation of the region to Canada, as indeed they had been to some degree. This belief produced in 1868 a series of articles in *Le Nouveau Monde*, an ultramontane weekly of Montreal, which alone of the French press in

<sup>1</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I. Malmros to J. B. Davis, January 6, 1869, No. 21.



## 6 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

Quebec displayed some interest in the North-West and in the missionary work of the church there. The articles, which were printed as a pamphlet in 1868 under the title of *Esquisse sur le nord-ouest de l'Amérique Septentrionale*, put the possibilities of agricultural settlement of the North-West in a most cautious, not to say unfavourable, light. They were an explicit reply to the advocacy of immediate settlement then being carried on by much of the English press of Canada, and by the *Globe* of Toronto in particular.

The views of the clergy were very close to that of their people, the *métis*, and for some individual members of the clergy the closeness, as will be seen, became an identity of view. But there is no evidence that the clergy would have attempted by any overt act to oppose or delay the transfer. The evidence that members of the clergy instigated the Resistance is not extensive, although it is significant. They did see in it, at the least, an adequate expression of their own fears, and they, including Bishop Taché, used the Resistance to obtain safeguards which might enable their people to sustain the shock of the opening of the North-West to settlement.<sup>1</sup>

If the Roman Catholic clergy on the whole followed discreetly where the *métis* dared to tread, the resident officers of the Hudson's Bay Company were at least tempted to do the same. Like the missionaries, the local officers of the Company had come to fear the major adjustments which would be necessary in the conduct, and indeed in the character, of the Company's operation once the North-West was opened to settlement. Not only would the Company cease to be the government of the country, and become one of the governed, its officers citizens among citizens; but also the new government would be one of Canadians, perhaps under the influence of the years of propaganda against the Company. With settlement would come an increase in the number of

<sup>1</sup> The reluctance of the Roman Catholic clergy at the beginning of the Resistance was noted by various contemporaries and variously described. See No. VII below; also U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, November 6, 1869, No. 14: "This movement has the sanction of the clergy." "Justitia" (Alexander Beggs) wrote in the *Globe*, January 6, 1870, that "the Catholic clergy have taken a great part, but it is a political, not a religious movement."

competitors in the fur-trade, and great and unpredictable changes in the distribution of wild life and in the regulation of relations with the Indians, on which the conduct of the fur-trade depended.

In addition to these general causes for misgiving, the officers of the Company resident in Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory had a definite grievance of their own. This was the failure of the Governor and Committee, and the General Court of the Company, to consult them with respect to the terms on which the Company had surrendered its rights in the North-West to the Crown for transfer to Canada, or to acknowledge explicitly the right of the commissioned officers of the Company to a share in the sum of £300,000 to be paid by Canada in compensation for that surrender. A further aggravation of their uncertainty and discontent was that the officers at Fort Garry, and in particular William MacTavish, who was Governor both of Rupert's Land and Assiniboia, had not been informed of the time or manner of the transfer by the Governor and Committee of the Company, the Imperial Government, or the Canadian Government.<sup>1</sup> There is good reason to think that the perplexity and discontent of MacTavish and his subordinates was communicated to the *métis*.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, no evidence, and no reason to think that any officer of the Company, with the exception of John H. MacTavish, Chief Accountant at Fort Garry,<sup>3</sup> either inspired

<sup>1</sup> This seems incredible, but see *The Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambrose D. Lévesque* (Winnipeg, 1914), p. 23. Ritchot's evidence: "asked him [between October 27 and 30] if the Government of Assiniboia existed: the Governor looked somewhat embarrassed, and said he preferred not to give an answer." See also No. XXII below.

<sup>2</sup> See L. A. Prod'homme, *Monographie Néo-Braséilienne* (Winnipeg, 1908), p. 62.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Lang, *Life, Letters and Stories of Sir Sanford Northcote, First Earl of Lifford* (London, 1890), p. 329: "Perhaps the worst news was that some of the Company's officers were thought to have abetted Riel"; I. Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers* (Toronto, 1913), p. 39: "... Not one but Mr. John H. MacTavish, a Roman Catholic, was ever believed by us to have been sympathetic..."; Northcote Papers, IV, 1-4. Northcote to C. Lampson, April 20, 1870: "Smith tells me that there is unfortunately some foundation for the complaints made against some of our servants in the matter of the insurrection, and that Mr. John MacTavish in particular was undoubtedly leagued with Riel." [The last reference is by courtesy of Professor D. G. Craighead.]

the Resistance of the *métis* to the transfer, or attempted to use that Resistance for any purpose of the Company.

If the resident officers viewed the transfer of the North-West to Canada with misgivings, they also accepted it with resignation, for they had no alternative to desire or advocate. Any disposition that individual officers may have shown in favour of annexation to the United States was owing to one or all of three factors. First, there was disbelief in the ability of Canada to maintain the union with the North-West. Second, there was resentment at English indifference to the fate of the North-West. Finally, there were the agreeable relations established with American businessmen and publicists,<sup>1</sup> which influenced sentiment but did not create any positive wish for political union with the United States.

Feeling was quite otherwise amongst the little body of American traders which had grown up in St. Boniface and the village of Winnipeg since about 1860. Of these the Canadian-American, Norman W. Kittson of St. Paul, had been the precursor when he visited Red River in 1844 after opening his trading-post at Pembina. Kittson had married a daughter of Narcisse Marion, a Canadian of St. Boniface, and thereafter for many years was a frequent visitor to Red River. By the early sixties the Americans, some of German or Irish descent and of Catholic faith, were a considerable element in the little village of Winnipeg, the seat of the free traders in competition with the Hudson's Bay Company. In the main, the Americans did not engage in the fur-trade itself, but were saloon-keepers, particularly the Germans and Irish, and merchants retailing goods imported from St. Paul. As such, they were able to maintain good relations with the Company and with all other elements in the community, and as a group were well liked.

The Americans were, however, naturally and inevitably annexationists. Some of them had come to Red River in the

<sup>1</sup> M.H.S., Taylor Papers, Taylor to Hamilton Fish, January 25, 1870: "I have long been aware that a strong feeling in favour of annexation pervades the entire body of the Hudson Bay Company officials." Taylor had visited Red River in 1859, and kept in close touch since that date. Like all Americans, he exaggerated pro-American sentiment in Red River.



expectation that the pull of continental economic forces would draw the North-West into the Republic. In nursing this expectation they were only the local representatives of those ambitious citizens of St. Paul who saw their city becoming the metropolis of the North-West of America and irresistibly drawing the Canadian North-West to it by the golden bonds of commerce and the supposed attraction of republican institutions. These hopes were the result of a naïve and unaggressive belief in the power of natural economic forces and of the continental destiny of the United States. That such a belief was out of date in 1869, in consequence of the rise of economic nationalism in the United States and of political nationalism in Canada, had not yet been realized. Because of this amiable and expectant attitude, the Americans of Winnipeg did nothing overt to inspire or stiffen the Resistance of the *métis* to the transfer. Their attitude was outwardly correct, non-committal and yet sympathetic. As they confidently expected the Resistance to end in annexation, they were at first content to wait upon events, giving advice when asked, and even, it was said, some supplies;<sup>1</sup> not hiding their desire for annexation, but not otherwise actively pushing the cause.

This passive attitude was not shared, however, by certain Americans at Pembina, such as the *métis* Joseph Rolette, Senior and Junior, by Charles Cavillier, by the French-Canadian Joseph Lemay, and by the passing American lawyer and land speculator, Enos Stutsman. They from the first endeavoured to give the Resistance an annexationist visage; and, as they were the only channel of news to the outside world, they succeeded only too well.<sup>2</sup> When the Resistance was made effective in December, these active annexationists were joined by certain Americans of Winnipeg, notably Henry M. Robinson, Hugh F. O'Lone and H. S. Donaldson, who then endeavoured to bring Riel and the *métis* to choose annexation. When both Joseph Rolette, Junior, and Stutsman visited Fort

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S.B. Dugas to Taché, November 2, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> The Pembina correspondents of the *Daily Press* of St. Paul who signed themselves "Spectator", "Panmican", "C", and "Liberty" were, it is scarcely beyond doubt, Stutsman, Cavillier and Joseph Rolette, Junior. See *Daily Press*, December 12, 1869; January 11, 1870; January 15, 1870; January 30, 1870.



Garry in early January, the American endeavour to bring about annexation reached its height.

These then,—the Roman Catholic clergy, the local officers of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the American traders of Winnipeg,—were the elements which viewed the transfer with misgiving or looked to some other future for the North-West. Before turning to those who welcomed the approaching union with Canada, it will be convenient to describe two other groups that were divided in feeling. These were the free traders of Red River, and the English-speaking settlers of both white and mixed blood.

The Hudson's Bay Company's exclusive licence to trade in Rupert's Land and the North-West had lapsed in 1859, but its monopoly of trade under the Charter of May 2, 1670 remained in force. Since the trial of Guillaume Sayer in 1849, however, the Company had ceased to employ its political and judicial powers to enforce its commercial monopoly, and had relied on its established position, traditional skills, and capital resources to meet competition by "free" traders. In this it had been largely successful. Free traders had none the less established themselves in some numbers. These included former servants of the Company like Andrew McDermot and his son-in-law, A. G. B. Bannatyne; newcomers from Canada or the United States like E. L. Barber and W. G. Fonseca; immigrants who came in for other purposes and took up the free trade as a side line or as a more lucrative calling, such as Dr. John Christian Schultz and his partner, W. R. Bown of Canada. There was in fact a place for free traders in the fur-trade, particularly in seasons when muskrat skins were plentiful and in demand, and especially in the thriving trade in buffalo robes. Those in Red River managed to make fair profits, to judge by their continuance in the trade, but they did not seriously embarrass the great Company, which was content to maintain a keen, but fair and tolerant, competition.

The attitude of the Company towards the free traders, however, differed sharply between two elements. Towards one it was friendly, and its local officers were indeed intimately linked with it; towards the other it was coldly hostile. The former may be termed the old Red River element. At its

centre was Andrew McDermot, father-in-law of Governor Mactavish; and its principal member was his son-in-law, A. G. B. Bannatyne. It was this group that Alexander Begg joined in 1868 as Bannatyne's partner, and the tone of his journal reflects their views. On its fringes were traders like Alexander Logan, W. G. Fonseca, the firm of Inkster and Boyd, and plains traders such as James McKay, a brother-in-law of Governor Mactavish, and the Gingras, father and son. The ties by marriage of Governor William Mactavish no doubt go far to explain the friendly relations between this group and the Company; but it is probable that there were commercial ties also, such as the re-sale of furs to the Company, the granting of freighting contracts by the Company, and perhaps some rough division of areas of trade, or at least some specialization in trade. So close were the ties between this group and the local representatives of the Company that the group shared the Company's doubts as to the transfer. Their attitude was expressed, with a marked firmness and boldness, by A. G. B. Bannatyne, to the effect that the transfer should take place, but on specific terms, and that, if the terms were not satisfactory, the North-West should face the possibility of annexation to the United States.<sup>1</sup> It is not meant to suggest that all members of the group, much less the Company's officials, were so clear-cut and positive in their views. Bannatyne, however, did develop and express the logic of their position.

The other element consisted of a small number of Canadian traders. The hostility of the Company's officers to these men, of whom Dr. Schultz was chief, is not to be explained by the extent of their competition or by the fact that they were Canadian. It was caused by their persistence in accompanying their competition by an agitation against the Company's monopoly and its government of the country. The agitation was conducted in the *Nor'Wester*, the Settlement's only newspaper up to 1869, of which Schultz had acquired control in 1864. That is to say, the hostility between the Company and the Canadian free traders was not commercial but political, and turned upon, not so much the Company's commercial position

<sup>1</sup> See Bannatyne's letter in Begg's *Journal* below, November 22, 1869; also January 6, 1870.

in the North-West, as its title to the lands of Rupert's Land and its powers of government. In the circumstances, there was also much personal animosity.

The second group divided in feeling, the English-speaking colonists—the Kildonan Scots, the Orcadian Scots and Irish half-breeds of St. Andrew's, Middlechurch, St. James, and the other parishes of the Assiniboine as far west as St. Mary's at Portage la Prairie, the Irish and Scottish pensioners—were the most numerous element in the Settlement. All were prepared to accept the transfer, but a few thought terms should be demanded of Canada before the transfer was completed. At the other extreme, some saw it as a matter of simple loyalty, and were ardently in favour of union with Canada as a means of confirming the British allegiance of Red River. These were settlers with Canadian connections, or pensioners manifesting a soldier's unquestioning loyalty. The great majority, however, were passive, if not apathetic. Most of them disliked the failure to consult the people or the authorities of the colony in any way, but were confident either that Canada would do the right thing, or that the Imperial Government would ensure that it was done. Amongst the half-breeds, however, were many who disliked the Canadians in the Settlement, and to whom Canada was unknown; and these were worried as to how they would fare in the new order. Thus the English-speaking population was divided by its two extremes, one in favour of the demanding of terms, the other in favour of unquestioning acceptance; while the great central body of sentiment was inclined to risk nothing for Canada, and was at first not unsympathetic with the cause, if critical of the acts, of the *métis*, with whom they possessed ties of blood and of long association on hunt and trip. When all the above groups are taken into account, only a small part of the population of the Red River Settlement remains.

There was, in short, little active sentiment for union with Canada. No official or semi-official action had been taken to create any; and in the circumstances of the colony and its government by the Hudson's Bay Company, it would have been difficult, if not impossible, to do so. What was done had been done by the *Globe*, which had its subscribers in the



Settlement, and by English Canadian immigrants to Red River. The first of these had come after 1857, the year in which Upper Canadian interest in the annexation of the North-West became active with the despatch of the exploring expeditions led by S. J. Dawson and H. Y. Hind. Some of these immigrants were farmers in search of land, like John McLean, who settled at Portage la Prairie in 1862. A few drifted in year by year, nearly all going to the upper Assiniboine parishes, until in 1868-1869 there came Roderick McKenzie, who pushed beyond Portage to stake a claim, with a few other Canadians, at Rat Creek.<sup>1</sup> This infiltration of land seekers, though highly significant of what would follow when access to the prairie lands became easier, was quiet and hardly noted. It was other Canadians, who settled in Winnipeg to practise professions and enter the free trade, who attained notoriety. This small handful of men, led by Dr. John Schultz, were advocates of Canada's manifest destiny to acquire the North-West. When in 1864 Schultz had acquired an interest in the *Nor'Wester* he had made it a reckless advocate of Canadian annexation and an embittered critic of the Hudson's Bay Company's "monopoly" and government. In 1865 Schultz became full proprietor, and in 1868 sold out to his partner W. R. Bown; but both only succeeded in alienating the Company and the authorities of the Settlement without winning any noticeable popular support. They and the "Canadian party", as their followers were called, succeeded indeed in making the name of Canada unpopular amongst the great majority of the Settlement, and this fact largely accounts for the hostility or indifference with which the transfer was viewed. In the spring and summer of 1869, however, the Canadian party was strengthened by a steady trickle of English Canadian immigrants into the Settlement. With its numbers thus increased and with its prestige enhanced, the Canadian party and its leader, Dr. Schultz, bade fair to become a considerable power under the new order, and indeed to be its principal beneficiaries. It is this likelihood of the small and intensely unpopular Canadian party becoming the chief power and established favourite in the new order that more than

<sup>1</sup> P.A.M., Diary of Roderick McKenzie, July 29, 1869.



anything else explains the Resistance of the *métis* to the transfer in 1869.<sup>1</sup>

## II

Bearing in mind this analysis of the attitudes of the different elements in the Red River Settlement towards the transfer of the North-West Territory to the Dominion, it is possible to examine the causes of the Resistance with understanding. These causes may be classified as the fundamental and the immediate.

The fundamental causes lay in the character of the Red River Settlement. Lord Selkirk's colony on Red River was founded and developed as an adjunct of the fur-trade. Selkirk's colony, indeed, had only served to precipitate a tendency towards settlement in the North-West already manifest amongst the officers and servants of the North-West and Hudson's Bay companies. This tendency arose from two causes: one, the need of a food supply for the conduct of the fur-trade now extended from the St. Lawrence to the Pacific; and two, the need to make provision in the country for the fur traders' families of mixed blood. As a natural concomitant of the continental fur-trade, the Red River Settlement had developed its peculiar character of a civilized community in the wilderness; a community civilized indeed, but dependent upon, and in constant contact with, the wilderness through hunt and trip. Even farming had its seasonal links with the uncultivated wastes, for the agriculture of Red River depended upon an unlimited supply of wild hay and the possibility of "wintering" cattle in the woods. Thus any fundamental change in the order of life which had developed during the régime of the fur-trade would have profound repercussions on the Red River Settlement. This was true of all elements in the Settlement to some degree, even of the Scots of Kildonan, who had pursued

<sup>1</sup> A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to Smith, September 7, 1869. "The chief cause of hostility on the part of the half breeds appears to be that they thought every Canadian official as he arrived was too intimate with Dr. Schultz and his party, and they suspected were acting under the doctor's influence, which they supposed would not be in their favour."

agriculture exclusively and kept themselves apart in great measure from the mixture of blood which was rapidly making all Red River a half-caste society. But it was especially true of the French element, of whom the great majority were *métis*.

The Red River Settlement was an Anglo-French colony, united by a substratum of Indian blood drawn from the fur-trade. As it was dual in composition, so had it been dual in origin. Its English half, Scots and Orcadian, sprang from the officers and servants of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Selkirk colonists direct from the British Isles. Its French half sprang from the *engagés*—rarely from the *bourgeois*—of the North-West Company direct from Lower Canada. Thus the larger part of the French community of Red River derived from the lowest ranks of the fur-trade, from the Company which had been absorbed in the union of 1821, and from a Canadian, not a British, source. It had also been far more deeply immersed in the sea of Indian blood and Indian custom, partly because of the low rank of its white progenitors, partly from the French gift of intimacy with the savage mind and savage customs. From all these accidents and qualities sprang that readiness to identify themselves with the North-West which the North-West Company had fostered in the *métis*, in an effort to use them against Selkirk's colony and the Hudson's Bay Company. It had encouraged them to claim title to the lands of the North-West as a birthright from their Indian mothers, and to think of themselves as a "new nation". The *nation métisse* had never lost this original sense of identity; and even after being reconciled to the colony of which it had been the scourge, and to the Company that its old *bourgeois* had fought, the "new nation" of the half-breeds remained a community apart in the larger community of Red River. This sense of community had been kept alive by the great annual buffalo hunts, the all but exclusive occupation of the *métis*, and the recurrent conflicts with the Sioux. It had been kept alive by Canadian leaders, amongst whom the elder Riel may be noted, and by the conflict with the Company over free trade in 1844-1849. After the reconciliation with the Company which followed 1849, it was confirmed by the use of the *métis*

as the bulwark of the colony against the Sioux, and their consequent realization that they were, in the absence of regular troops after 1861, the one organized armed force in the Settlement. Nor did the dependence of the Company on the *métis* to man the boat and cart brigades, and the dependence of the Settlement on the buffalo hunts for provisions and robes, do anything to diminish this corporate consciousness.

The French community as a whole, it is true, had developed beyond the simple and essentially nomadic society and economy of the *métis*. It now included elements other than hunters and *voyageurs*. There was a small group of Canadians in St. Boniface, mostly craftsmen, and educated, settled folk. There were French and *métis* traders and farmers, like the Hamelin, Grant, Nolin, Dauphinais, Dease, and Gingras families. But no professional middle class had developed: the *métis* had given no priest to the church, no lawyer to the courts of Assiniboia, no doctor to practise among his people. Of three young *métis* sent to Lower Canada by Bishop Taché in 1858—Louis Riel, Louis Schmidt and Daniel McDougall—not one had qualified for any profession. Thus the “new nation”, even more than Red River as a whole, was ill equipped to fit itself into any new order which might follow union with Canada. And now the dwindling of the buffalo herds was being acutely felt, the railway was pushing north from St. Paul, and the terms of the transfer of the North-West to Canada had been settled in London.

For all Red River, then, and particularly for the *métis*, the transfer of jurisdiction in and over the North-West from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Dominion of Canada was a crisis in its history. A fundamental disturbance of wonted ways, a major adjustment to new conditions, was inevitable. It cannot be assumed, however, that opposition to the transfer was also inevitable. The task of the historian of the events recorded in the following documents is, in stating the immediate causes of the Red River Resistance, in fact to explain why there was resistance at all.

The mere suddenness of the event, or precipitancy on the part of the Canadian government or the Imperial authorities, however, was not a factor in provoking the armed rising of the



*métis*. Since 1849 dissatisfaction had been expressed with the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, at first by the *métis* and later by the Canadian party and its friends in Red River. The claim that the government of the Governor and Council of Assiniboia was subordinate to the wishes and interests of the Hudson's Bay Company, though usually proceeding from critics engaged in the free trade in furs, was not unjustified, if the North-West was envisaged as an area of agricultural settlement. That government was a chartered and proprietary one, of seventeenth-century origin and model, which had survived into the nineteenth century because of the remoteness of the North-West and the consequent establishment there of the régime of the continental and permanent fur-trade. That it was an anachronism was generally realized; and since 1857 ways and means of superseding it by a more adequate and modern form of government had been intermittently under discussion. But any action was prevented by the reluctance of the Imperial parliament to extend imperial responsibilities in the heyday of Victorian *laissez-faire*, and by the unwillingness of Canada either to buy out the title of the Hudson's Bay Company or to put it to the test of litigation before the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. The failure to provide a new government was accompanied by a steady decline in the authority and prestige of the old, until in 1869 the Government of Assiniboia was extremely weak, functioning by routine and acquiescence, and incapable of meeting even a minor challenge to its authority. For over a decade, then, some kind of change had been expected in Red River, and surprise was not an element in the troubles of 1869.

What actually happened was that in 1868 the Settlement was threatened by famine. Grasshoppers ruined the crops; the buffalo hunts failed; the fisheries failed; even the rabbits and other game disappeared, or were scarce. The periodic shortages of provisions in Red River had affected the less provident of the population in the past; but in 1868 all but the most fortunate were affected by actual want, or by the consequent high prices of provisions. It was this breakdown of the traditional economy of the Settlement, as much as the



transfer in the following year, that marked the end of the old order in the North-West. The situation was met, however, and its significance masked, by generous gifts of money and provisions from the Hudson's Bay Company, from St. Paul, and from Canada. Employment in freighting was ample and wages were high. Though there was suffering amongst the poor, the worst extremities of famine were averted.

The famine, however, brought about the first semi-official contact since 1857 with the Dominion of Canada. For years successive Canadian governments had hoped to open the land and water route between Lake Superior and Red River, which S. J. Dawson had proposed in 1859. In 1868, the Canadian Minister of Public Works was the Honourable William McDougall, one of the principal advocates of the annexation of the North-West to Canada. In anticipation of the settlement of the terms of transfer, and as a means of contributing to the relief of distress in Red River, McDougall despatched a party under John A. Snow to begin construction of a road from Fort Garry to the North-West Angle of the Lake of the Woods. Parties under S. J. Dawson were also set working westward across the height of land from Fort William, or Thunder Bay, as it was then called. The Canadian government had no legal right whatever, of course, to construct a public work in territory claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company or which, in the most favourable construction, was in dispute between the Company and Canada. Snow was instructed, however, to ask permission of Governor William Mactavish. This he did orally, and permission was granted orally and seemingly cordially, although Mactavish was embarrassed by the request, and had serious misgivings as to its possible implications and the propriety of his granting it.<sup>1</sup> Snow at once established his headquarters at Oak Point where wood and prairie met some twenty-five miles south-east of Fort Garry, engaged *métis* as labourers, and began to cut a road. There seems to be little reason to doubt that this semi-official but informal intrusion of a party sent out by a department of the Canadian government might, without arousing hostility, have achieved its twofold purpose of alleviating distress in Red River and of

<sup>1</sup> A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, November 11, 1868.

assisting the opening of communications with Canada over British soil. Its year of work, before the Resistance brought operations to a halt was, however, marred by a series of irritations which are commonly alleged to have injured the cause of Canada in Red River and are frequently cited as causes of the rising of the *métis*. There was, it is said, discontent with the wages paid by Snow. These were perhaps low by the standards of Red River, but they were the same as those paid to workers on the Thunder Bay road, and they were somewhat increased in the course of the year.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, it was alleged that these wages were paid in provisions at Oak Point, at prices considerably above those obtaining at Fort Garry.<sup>2</sup> The prices reported to have been charged were those of Snow's return to the Department of Public Works.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps the difference between them and those of Fort Garry is to be explained, not only by the twenty-five miles between the two places, but also by the fact that the goods were bought and transported late in 1868 in competition with the strenuous efforts of the Emergency Relief Committee to procure sufficient supplies for the Settlement before winter closed the river and the cart trails. Therefore Snow, it would seem, may well have been justified both in the wages paid and the prices charged. In any case, the irritation caused by his management of his men and supplies was a passing one; for in the following year he had nothing but praise for the *métis* working for him. In contrast to these were the Canadian and American workmen he employed, with whom he had serious trouble over a work stoppage and wages, which resulted in an assault upon himself and a civil action in the courts of Assiniboia.

Another irritation, which affected the whole Settlement, was caused by remarks in a private letter from Snow's paymaster, Charles Mair, to a brother in Perth, Ontario. One passage was in execrable taste, but other portions extolled the potentialities of the North-West, and it is presumably these which led Holmes Mair to give the letter to the *Perth Courier*,

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870, V (12), Snow to McDougall, August 2, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> For example, in *Le Nouveau Monde*, February 25, 1869; *Canada: Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 13, Taché's evidence.

<sup>3</sup> C.S.P., 1870, V (12), Snow to Department of Public Works, February 21, 1870.

from which it was copied by the *Globe* and other Canadian newspapers. Mair was already a man of some note. A native of Perth and a student at Queen's University, he had in 1868 published *Dreamland and Other Poems*, a slender volume of vaguely Keatsian verse. In the same year he was privately engaged by William McDougall, himself a versifier as well as a journalist and politician, to prepare an abridgement and collation of the sources of North-West history. This task Mair discharged to McDougall's satisfaction and, to judge by his later references to that history, with considerable thoroughness. McDougall proposed to continue the relationship, and it was only by accident that Mair failed to accompany McDougall and Cartier to London for the negotiations of the terms of the transfer. As compensation for this mishap, he was appointed paymaster to Snow's party, and so came to pass the winter of 1868, not at the heart of Empire, but on the verge of the North-West prairie. For reasons to be stated presently, it is likely that Mair was not as disappointed as would seem natural. Certainly he did not allow any disappointment he may have felt to dampen his spirits. If one may accept, at a judicious discount, the satirical portrait of Mair which Alexander Begg drew in his *Dot-it-Down*,<sup>1</sup> Mair created the impression that he was a bumptious and superior young man, too free with the girls and too intimate with the bottle. Certainly reports of his drinking were such that McDougall was constrained to reproach him,<sup>2</sup> and the rest of the impression the offensive passage in his published letter served to confirm. One result of that letter, when copies of the *Globe* containing it reached Red River, was that Mrs. A. G. B. Bannatyne publicly horsewhipped Mair. Another was a reply from a correspondent of *Le Nouveau Monde*, who signed himself "L.R.". This was almost certainly another youthful versifier, of the name of Louis Riel, who displayed a satirical gift much superior to Mair's somewhat clownish ridicule.<sup>3</sup> Still another result was an increase in the

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Begg, *Dot-it-Down, A story of life in the North-West* (Toronto, 1871), pp. 252-253.

<sup>2</sup> Q.U.L., Mair Papers, McDougall to Mair, June 13, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See No. I and No. II below.



unpopularity of the English Canadians in Red River. Finally, the letter resulted in Mair becoming a regular correspondent of the *Globe*, as he had been of the *Gazette* of Montreal, and he showed himself in its columns an eloquent—but chastened—advocate of immediate settlement of the North-West, and of Canada's manifest destiny there.

As such, Mair at once became the opponent of those who doubted the fitness of the North-West for extensive settlement and who feared an immediate immigration. Mair had come with a cordial introduction to Bishop Taché from the Reverend Æneas Macdonnell, who described him as "a respecer of Catholics";<sup>1</sup> but in an interview with Taché Mair apparently found the Bishop less than enthusiastic with respect to the prospects of a large agricultural immigration.<sup>2</sup> What is certain is that the spirit which inspired his articles in the *Globe* was the spirit of a new movement, just taking shape amongst a few young Canadians. It was the spirit of the group later to be known as "Canada First". Mair at Red River was in constant and copious correspondence with some of the young men who in two or three years were to make the cry of "Canada First" a slogan of power in Canadian politics. These were George T. Denison, R. G. Haliburton, and H. J. Morgan, who were just beginning to share their ideas by talk and correspondence. But they were active, talented, and anxious for recruits. In 1868, largely through Mair's agency, they had found one in John Christian Schultz, a man after their own heart, who had in fact already made himself a daring exponent of "Canada First" in Red River. Mair and Schultz thus represented in Red River an English-Canadian "forward" party which stood for everything the French clergy and the *métis* had to fear.

"Canada First" was only beginning to take shape, however, and Mair's indiscretions would soon have been forgotten, as Snow's economical management would have been forgotten, if both men had not become intimate associates of

<sup>1</sup> Q.U.L., Mair Papers, the Reverend Æneas Macdonnell to Taché, October 6, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Q.U.L., Mair Papers, "Red River Memorandum." This is an account by Mair, undated but obviously much later, of the events of 1869-1870.



John Schultz.<sup>1</sup> This bold, ambitious and aggressive man had become the focus of all the dislike and distrust of Canadians and things Canadian in Red River. Schultz was the outspoken advocate of Canadian annexation, the commercial competitor and political antagonist of the Hudson's Bay Company; and he did not trouble to conceal his expectation in 1869 that he would himself be a beneficiary of the transfer.<sup>2</sup> Yet these things do not quite explain why Schultz himself should have inspired such distrust, and why association with him should have brought a similar distrust upon others. There was much to the man's credit. He sincerely sought to develop the North-West; he saw its possibilities with the vision of the statesman as well as the eye of the speculator; and his many acts of unrequited kindness in his profession were acknowledged particularly by the French clergy and the *métis*.<sup>3</sup> The handsomest of men, tall, solid, and quick in movement, he was yet reserved, studious and low-voiced; able but not popular; winning men, if at all, by force of intellect, not by the power of affection. His reputation amongst the leading men of Red River was that he was a selfish and unscrupulous adventurer; his friends thought him a champion of popular rights and a Canadian patriot. Such was the ambiguous personality of the leader of the Canadian party;<sup>4</sup> and he remains still the sinister paradox he was in 1869.

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to McDougall, November 24, 1869. "Mr. Dawson is strongly of the opinion that much of the trouble has arisen from the injudicious conduct of Snow in allying himself with the Schultz party, and Mair's exceedingly indiscreet letters. He says he fears also that Stoughton Dennis put himself too much in the hands of those people."

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 24, 1869. "Schultz fait courir les bruits qu'on va lui donner sans peu la place de shérif." (Schultz is spreading the word that he is going to be given before long the office of sheriff.) J. W. Taylor reported, at second hand, that Schultz was "a person of unusual talent and force of character, although represented to be entirely unscrupulous". U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, January 25, 1870. Macdonald's impression was that he was "a clever sort of man but exceedingly cantankerous and ill-conditioned". P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to Rose, November 23, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See Louis Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below; also L. A. Prud'homme, *Monsieur l'abbé Louis-Raymond Giroux* (Quebec, 1922), p. 41.

<sup>4</sup> P.A.M., Red River disturbances, manuscript of George B. Winslip.

The quality of the enmity Schultz inspired at that time, however, requires further explanation, as it seems that he had become a *bête noire* both of the *métis* and of the Catholic clergy. The reasons for this cannot be stated with certainty, but some matters may be noted as being relevant. In 1864 Schultz was a leader in the formation at Winnipeg of the Northern Lights Lodge of the Order of Free and Affiliated Masons.<sup>1</sup> And in 1867 he married Anne Campbell Farquharson when that lady had just been baptized as a convert to Roman Catholicism.<sup>2</sup> The marriage put an end to the conversion. Schultz's stormy career, and the suspicion of unscrupulous dealing which attached to him after his law suit with his half-brother, Henry McKenney, would account for his being treated with reserve by the clergy as well as by the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. But the dislike and distrust with which he was viewed by the clergy and *métis* may well have been intensified by his adherence to Free Masonry and the circumstances of his marriage.<sup>3</sup>

It is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the feeling roused against Snow and Mair was aggravated by their intimate association with Schultz, an error other Canadians later committed. The feeling was also augmented by William McDougall, who apparently took no pains to see that a single French Canadian was a member of Snow's party or of the survey party which was to follow. All this seemed to confirm a growing suspicion amongst clergy and *métis* that English, Protestant, Orange *Ontario*, not the Dominion of Canada, was to annex the North-West and swamp its people with a rush of rough lumber-jacks from the Ottawa Valley and hard-handed backwoods farmers from Bruce and Huron counties. The fear was not unjustified. It was the expectation both of McDougall, who represented in the Dominion Cabinet the "Clear Grit" wing of Canadian Liberalism—anti-clerical, democratic and uncompromisingly Anglo-Saxon—and also of

<sup>1</sup> William Douglas, *Free Masonry in Manitoba* (Winnipeg, 1925), p. 12 and pp. 16-17.

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Lestanc to Taché, May 27, 1867; Lestanc to Taché, September 6, 1867.

<sup>3</sup> The dislike Schultz aroused recalls that felt by the *métis* for Recorder Adam Thom, whom they refused to have sit on the Bench or in Court after the Sayer trial of 1849.

the youthful conspirators of the nascent "Canada First" party, who had hailed Schultz as a fellow soul, that the North-West would in fact become an extension of Ontario.

While the hard winter of 1868-1869 was passing slowly in Red River, McDougall and the Honourable Georges-Etienne Cartier were negotiating in London the terms of the transfer of the North-West to Canada. In March their work was completed; in May the news appeared in the *Nor'Wester*. Further details, and the Canadian reactions to the terms, were brought to the Settlement by returning travellers. But this news, so momentous for the people of the North-West, whose future it determined, and for the Governor and Council of Assiniboia, whose legal existence it would terminate, was communicated to the people of the North-West and the Governor and Council in no official way whatever. The result was that Dame Rumour, who even in quiet times ruled Red River, conquered all minds. Uncertainty bred fear, and fear bred a distrust of Canada, to which the majority of people in Red River, and particularly the *métis*, were already too much inclined.

This lack of an official communication and the consequent uncertainty and disquiet was a major cause of the troubles which followed, and it is necessary at this point to attempt to assess the responsibility for it. The officials and people of Red River might have been told by any one of three authorities how the transfer was to be implemented and what the character of the new régime would be, the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Colonial Office, or the Canadian Government. The Hudson's Bay Company was an expiring government, only too anxious to surrender an ungrateful burden, and it had assumed no explicit undertaking for the date and manner of the transfer or for the condition of the territory and people at the time of transfer. The Company, indeed, was obliged, not to transfer to Canada its governmental authority over the territory, but to re-convey it to the Imperial Crown from which it had received it two centuries before. No doubt it was assumed that quiet possession of the North-West was intended by the terms of the transfer, as the Canadian Government was later to argue; no doubt it is true that, as the



actual government, the Company might have instructed its officers in Rupert's Land to make some announcement of the demise of government by the Company. Both are arguable points. What is both surprising and reprehensible, and seemingly of great consequence in precipitating the Resistance of the *métis*, was the failure of the Governor and Committee to advise their own local Governor, William Mactavish, of what to expect and of what was expected of him. The result was that the ailing, over-conscientious, and self-doubting man was left in great uncertainty as to his own position, an uncertainty he manifested to his intimates and perhaps betrayed to Riel.<sup>1</sup> For this the Hudson's Bay Company may be held responsible, but only on the assumption that it was exclusively responsible for affairs in the North-West until the actual moment of the transfer. This assumption would seem to be both unfair and unwarranted.

The Hudson's Bay Company was not the initiator of the negotiations which led to the transfer, nor was it more than reluctantly acquiescent in the terms. It knew, of course, that its government of Rupert's Land must soon end, and its main purpose was to drive the most favourable bargain it could for its proprietary rights under the Charter. But in the negotiations it was not an equal; it was neither a sovereign government, like that of the United Kingdom, nor a semi-sovereign one, like that of the Dominion of Canada. It was a subordinate government, and its responsibilities correspondingly less. The most that could be expected of it was that it should keep its own agents informed and vigilant in the discharge of their remaining

<sup>1</sup> Mactavish's relations with the Roman Catholic clergy were intimate, as Mrs. Mactavish was a Catholic; and he was singularly open and frank in his dealings with people of education. Reports of his interviews with Riel are given by Dugas (*L'histoire véridique*, pp. 43-52), by Prud'homme in his *Ritchot*, p. 62, and in his *Giroux*, p. 31, where he quoted from notes of Giroux on the Resistance. Indeed, at the time Fort Garry was seized (November 2) Mactavish is quoted as saying "qu'il ne se considérait plus gouverneur de la colonie, qu'ils avaient l'autorité et que les Métis représentés par le gouvernement provisoire devaient voir à la paix et à la sécurité des propriétés et de celles de la compagnie". (That he no longer considered himself governor of the colony, that they possessed authority, and that the *métis*, represented by the Provisional Government, ought to see to the peace and to the safety of property and of that of the Company.)



duties. It could not, however, do more without explicit direction either from the superintending Imperial Government or the succeeding Canadian one.

Neither undertook to give any such direction. It is not difficult to see why the Canadian Government should not have done so. Its responsibilities would begin at the moment of transfer. Its duty, then, was to be adequately prepared to assume those responsibilities at that time. This it attempted to do, though it may be doubted whether the preparations were wholly adequate. But it had no *locus standi* with respect to the Hudson's Bay Company. They were both subordinate governments of the Imperial Government, and the Imperial Government was the only means of communication between them. It was not a direct or ready channel, nor did the long-standing rivalry of Canada with the Company for control of the North-West make for spontaneous approaches or persistent efforts to communicate.<sup>1</sup> The Company, at any rate, was not officially informed by the Canadian Government of how it proposed to take over the government of the Territory, nor was it asked to perform any particular act or make any actual preparation. Here, perhaps, the Canadian Government was at fault, though it could only have communicated what was public knowledge, and in fact had nothing to ask beyond what it did ask, that its work parties be granted the privilege of carrying out the road building and surveys preparatory to the transfer.

At this point it is necessary to recall that all three parties concerned, the Company, the Imperial, and the Canadian Government, thought of the transfer as a legal and financial act

<sup>1</sup> There is a seeming irreconcilable conflict of evidence with respect to the relations between the Canadian Government and that of Rupert's Land. Mactavish complained that he had wished to advise the Canadian ministers when in Ottawa in the spring of 1869, and was not listened to, indeed, that his advice was not asked (A. McArthur, "The Causes of the Rising in the Red River Settlement, 1869-70," *Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba* IV (Winnipeg, n.d.), p. 2; *Report of the Select Committee 1874*, Taché's evidence, p. 14; Macdonald said that Mactavish had given no warning, and had been informed of all that he, Howe and Cartier knew; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to George Stephen, December 9, 1869; *ibid.*, 101, Memo by Macdonald, December 16, 1869, for Privy Council, No. XIII below.

to be performed in London.<sup>1</sup> Little thought was given to a physical and ceremonial transfer of authority in Red River. This was the central mistake, and the responsibility for the mistake is clear. The legal form of the transfer, it is to be recalled, was a surrender of authority and proprietary rights by the Company to the Crown, to be followed within a month by a transfer of that authority and those rights to Canada on the payment of £300,000 sterling to the Company. The sovereign Imperial Government throughout acted as an intermediary, and made no preparation to assume immediate responsibility for the maintenance and conduct of government in the North-West; that responsibility would remain devolved upon the Company until the moment of transfer, and shortly, if not at once, thereafter pass to the Dominion of Canada. Yet a sovereign government can hardly make itself a mere channel of communication; in this instance it was sovereign of both the parties to the transfer, and responsible in the last analysis for every act of both. But the Liberal government of Prime Minister Gladstone was not disposed to take an extensive view of its imperial responsibilities; it was indeed seeking to reduce them considerably by turning over the North-West from the

<sup>1</sup> See *United Kingdom : Statutes*, 31 & 32 Victoria, chap. 105, Sections 3 & 5 for legal steps of the transfer, and for the immediate extension of Canadian jurisdiction on the completion of the transfer over the North-West Territories; all officers at the time of the transfer were to remain in office, however, until replaced by those authorized by the Parliament of Canada.

One of the curiosities of the Resistance was that everyone, as an acute observer at the time noted, regarded the Hudson's Bay Company as a sovereign power: "Red River Correspondence" in *Montreal Herald*, December 4, 1869. (This correspondent was J. J. Hargrave, Secretary to Governor Mactavish.) Much of the Resistance turns on this misconception. Thus Riel could contemplate a period of anarchy following the end of the Company's rule, and a justification for a provisional government. Macdonald, who had warned McDougall that he was about to enter "a foreign country" in Red River, could hold the same view. Even the Imperial Government seemed to act on this view until the Law Officers recalled Lord Granville to reality by reminding him that in British territory governmental authority derives from the Crown; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to McDougall, November 23, 1869; *ibid.*, 101, Granville to Young, January 7, 1870.

Since the Crown neither claimed nor had ever exercised, since the grant of the Charter, any right of government in Rupert's Land (P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 101, Buckingham to Monck, September 3, 1868) the position was unusual.

incapable government of the Company to what it was hoped would be the competent authority of Canada. Because it viewed its responsibility in this light it failed to do what was necessary in the circumstances, and for that failure must be held in large part responsible for what followed.

What was necessary was plain and was seen at the time by Mactavish, Taché and Bishop Robert Machray of the Anglican Diocese of Rupert's Land.<sup>1</sup> This was the despatch of an Imperial Commission to Red River to make known to the government and people what was planned for them, to calm their fears, and to preside over the actual transfer of authority at Fort Garry. Only an Imperial Commission would have had sufficient standing; only an Imperial Commission would have been regarded as impartial. But none was sent; no evidence is known of the despatch of one having been considered, and Dame Rumour continued her harmful work in Red River.

The points on which re-assurance was necessary were four in number. The first was the claim of the chief factors and chief traders, as holders of shares in the Hudson's Bay Company, to share in the distribution of the £300,000 paid by Canada to the Company for the surrender of its rights in Rupert's Land. This was a matter of private concern within the Company; but an assurance from the Company through an Imperial Commission would have quieted the fears of a numerous and influential body of men, and would have disposed them to use their influence actively to have the transfer quietly accepted by the inhabitants of the North-West.

The second point requiring official explanation was of the

<sup>1</sup> A.H.B.C., D 10/1, Mactavish to the Honourable Joseph Howe, May 1, 1870, in which, reviewing the events of the past months, he declared it was a great mistake of the British and Canadian governments not to have sent commissioners in 1869 to explain what was to happen; Taché proposed an English and a French commissioner: Taché, *L'Amnistie* (Ottawa, 1873), p. 32. See also No. XXII below. Macdonald did not share this view, at least after the troubles had developed: P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to Rose, January 25, 1870, and February 23, 1870, says that if a Special Commissioner were sent, he should be a Canadian, "not an overwashed Englishman, full of crotchets as all Englishmen are." "Prime Minister Gladstone thought, when news of the outbreak reached London, that a plebiscite might have been held beforehand;" Paul Knaplund, "Gladstone on the Red River Rebellion, 1870", *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, June, 1934, pp. 76-77.



most public and general concern, that of land titles. The Company had claimed title to the lands of Rupert's Land under the Charter, and this claim it had now agreed to surrender to Canada. But the Company had not in any part of Rupert's Land extinguished the Indian title. Only Lord Selkirk had done so in his colony of Assiniboia, and there only in a narrow strip along the Red River from Lake Winnipeg to the international border, and from the forks of the Red and Assiniboine up the latter stream to Rat Creek. Some doubt had been cast even on the terms of this treaty by Peguis, one of the signatories, and his band of Christian Saulteaux and Swampy Indians in St. Peter's parish on the Red. Elsewhere the Indian title was intact; and the advent of Canadian settlers, and the rumours of the transfer, had already disturbed the bands in the vicinity of the Settlement. Nor were the Indians the only claimants under the Indian title. Both *métis* and English half-breeds claimed a share through their Indian mothers. Besides the Indian title, there was the question of legal title to lands in Assiniboia. The Selkirk estate and the Company since 1834 had issued titles to lands in the colony; and the Company had later fallen into the habit of selling lands, the only title being the record of the sale in the Land Books of the Company. Many Red River settlers were merely squatters, the greater part by far of the *métis* holding their lands only by squatter's right and the custom of the country.<sup>1</sup> So thoroughly was this fact realized, that the usage in the western settlements on the Assiniboine in purchasing river lots from original settlers, was to pay for improvements only. Thus most Canadian settlers in those parishes held their lands only by the custom of the country. It was plainly necessary to assure the Indians of generous treaties; to promise holders of land-deeds recognition under the new régime; and to guarantee squatter's rights of long standing. How necessary these assurances were was made evident by the outbreak of "claims-staking", both by Canadian newcomers and old settlers, in the summer of 1869,<sup>2</sup> often on lands already claimed.

<sup>1</sup> Archer Martin, *Hudson's Bay Company Land Tenures* (London, 1898), chaps. IV and V.

<sup>2</sup> A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, July 24, 1869; P.A.C., Diaries of Dr. William Cowan, July 19, 1869.



The land question was so much to the fore and so obviously important, that it is a temptation to explain the Resistance as primarily the reaction of native settlers to a rush of land-hungry immigrants, in a country in which no title was sure and in which the absent or outnumbered squatter might be dispossessed; but to do so would be an error.

More fundamental, and more urgent than the land question, was the third point, namely the assurance needed on the question of the political rights that the inhabitants of the North-West would secure under Canadian authority. It was the hope and expectation of all that they would enjoy in the Dominion those political rights which they had not possessed under the Company's rule,—namely the franchise and representative government,—with the expectation of achieving responsible government in due course. The demand for political rights had first been made in the late forties at the time of the contest for free trade. As the small colony could scarcely support institutions so elaborate, and as self-government was incompatible with its monopoly, the Company had conceded the essence of the demand, as it had conceded the substance of free trade, by gradually making the Council of Assiniboia representative of the various elements in the Settlement. So successful was this accommodation that the demand for self-government died down, until it was renewed in the context of Canadian annexation by the Canadian party in the sixties. The old settlers, though content enough with the informally representative government of the Council of Assiniboia, would have welcomed a Crown Colony régime tactfully introduced. Now the imminence of the transfer raised anew the question of political rights.

It was raised for all elements, but particularly concerned the *métis*, in view of all the signs pointing to an immediate immigration from Ontario and to Upper Canadian domination of the new government—the fourth point upon which assurances were needed. The French were the first explorers and the first settlers of the North-West. There they had preserved, in the wilderness and in the subordinate ranks of the fur-trade, their language, their faith and their traditions.

In the Red River Settlement they had formed, and were recognized as forming, a community within the community. What the *métis* and their clergy wanted to obtain from the new régime, therefore, was not only some assurance of the grant of individual political rights, but also safeguards for the perpetuation in the new era of their distinct position of a community within the community. In short, they wished to obtain for themselves a position in the North-West similar to that which the French of Quebec had won for themselves in Canada.

To state the point so, is to give it a sharpness it did not possess at the time in the minds of the leaders of the *métis*, or of the clergy, even of Bishop Taché. It was a point which emerged in the course of the action. But in retrospect it is apparent that an important feature of the Resistance of 1869 was that the *métis*, in demanding the traditional political rights of British subjects, were not being as legalistic as they seemed to their fellow-colonists of English speech. The latter were reasonably confident that Canada would grant those rights without undue delay, and sure that the Imperial Government would see that they were granted. Neither were the *métis* as disloyal as the Canadians in Red River thought when they interpreted the Resistance as rebellion aimed at annexation to the United States. The *métis* were not desirous of annexation, they were indeed opposed to it; but they were seeking to safeguard their survival as a people, to perpetuate the "new nation" within the framework of the new order in the North-West.

### III

Such were the issues which caused increasing agitation in Red River in the year before the beginnings of the Resistance in October, 1869. No sign of any contemplated opposition to the transfer appeared before July of that year in the Settlement itself. In the province of Quebec one weekly newspaper, *Le Nouveau Monde*, had indeed begun a quiet campaign designed to interest French Canadians in their heritage and brethren in the North-West and to dampen

### 3: BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

enthusiasm for any immediate rush of settlement. As already noted, Taché published in its columns the articles which became his *Essai sur le nord-ouest du Canada Supérieur*. One of his priests, a college friend of Riel, the Reverend L. R. Gosselin, who had come to Red River in 1868, was a correspondent of *Le Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe*,<sup>1</sup> and Riel was alleged by *La Presse* of Montreal to be a correspondent of *Le Nouveau Monde*, an allegation by no means convincingly denied.<sup>2</sup> In short, some effort was being made to light a torch against the campaign of the *Globe* for annexation and prompt settlement, and against the zeal for Canadian aggrandisement shown by the young patriots of the yet undeclared "Canada First" party.

There is evidence, however, that by July action was beginning to replace the endless talk, the agitation over land rights, and the uncertainty respecting the commercial and political future. The first fragments of evidence relate to a public meeting of the French inhabitants of Red River. It is not fully recorded in the surviving accounts, but it is certain that it was called by William Dease, an influential and respected *métis* and a Councillor of Assiniboia. The *métis* met at Fort Garry on July 19 to demand that the £300,000 to be paid by Canada to the Hudson's Bay Company should be distributed amongst the Indians and half-breeds of the North-West, as the rightful owners of the soil. The meeting is usually described as having no other object; and in itself this last challenge to the claim of the Company to be lords of the soil of Rupert's Land is of significance. Even more significant, however, is Dease's reported assertion that, if the demand were not granted, the people of the North-West should take the law into their own hands and seize the possessions of the Hudson's Bay Company. According to the same report, the meeting was dissuaded from approving any such course by a speech given by one John Bruce, a speech in which he is said to have been coached.<sup>3</sup> Other speakers supported Bruce, and the

<sup>1</sup> *Protestants, Gosselin*, p. 7.

<sup>2</sup> *La Presse*, November 23 and November 30, 1869; *Le Nouveau Monde*, November 30, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> A.H.S.B., *Dugan to Taché*, July 29, 1869.



meeting which he having driven a horse. It is a strange tale-telling in the sense which led to the explanation. Because it is difficult to understand why such a curious thing have been made in a man of Jesse's strength and who having made it he should have been killed in a matter of the Council of Assassins. The explanation which though obscure, lies in the fact that although it was a very famous who inspired the meeting. It is a matter of fact that Jesse would be exposed by a combination of Company and other influence which worked through force and other.

Such an explanation leads to clarify the history of why a movement led by individuals was to have the right of influence and was in the hands of the North-West and to set up a provisional government to control the land around Lake Superior and the right of the North-West. The explanation is simple. It is in the fact that the actual difference between the North and the North-West. The fact is that the North is a right of the right of the North. The fact is that the North is a right of the North-West and is a right of the North-West. The fact is that the North is a right of the North-West and is a right of the North-West. The fact is that the North is a right of the North-West and is a right of the North-West.

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'69 on the 15th of August of that year".<sup>1</sup> Riel and John Bruce, who had spoken against Dease at the meeting of July 29, soon emerged as the leaders of the second movement. Both were relatively young and obscure men. John Bruce, despite his name, was a *métis* of the parish of St. Norbert. He was a carpenter by trade, and is said to have had some dealings as a legal man, presumably in the conducting of cases in the courts of Assiniboia. Though not well educated, to judge by a few surviving letters, he was a man of presence and of some standing amongst his people. He is usually regarded as merely a figurehead for Riel, but this may be a mistaken judgement. His correspondence suggests that he was an obstinate, not too intelligent man, quite capable of electing a course of his own, but not sufficiently gifted to pursue a difficult course with either resolution or discernment.<sup>2</sup>

His companion was soon to be widely notorious, but already his name was a noted one in Red River. His father, Louis Riel the elder, had been an outstanding leader of the movement among the *métis* for self-government in 1849, and in the riotous assembly which forced the release of Sayer in the trial which eventually ended the monopoly of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thereafter the elder Riel remained a leader and champion of his people until his death in 1864. That event occurred while his son Louis was absent at college in Montreal, whither he had been sent, as already noted, by Bishop Taché in 1858. The home life of the Riels was singularly intimate and tender, and the loss of the father a blow of rending severity to the absent son and to the wife and other children in Red River.<sup>3</sup> It may well be that the loss crystallized a latent resolve of the son to be, like his father, a leader and champion of his people.

Riel had done well at the Collège de Montréal, especially in literature; but for reasons which are not certain, he did not

<sup>1</sup> From a "Compte rendu de ses activités" by Riel, in notes lent by the Abbé Pierre Picton of St. Boniface, and taken from Riel Papers in private hands.

<sup>2</sup> These details of Bruce's position and personality have been gleaned here and there, but particularly from a sketch in the *Daily Press* of St. Paul, January 8, 1870, written by "Liberty" (probably Joseph Rolette, Jr.) from St. Boniface shortly after Bruce's resignation from the presidency on grounds of ill-health.

<sup>3</sup> This statement is supported by the domestic letters in P.A.M., Riel Papers.

take the final year of philosophy, and left the college in March, 1865. Thus his formal education in the classics and in French literature was considerable but incomplete. He then spent a year in and near Montreal, mostly at the home of John Lee, an uncle by marriage, but also in touch with the family of L. F. R. Masson. He may have assisted, presumably in a clerical capacity, in the Masson law office. In June, 1866, he left for the West. Louis Schmidt, one of his companions of 1858, who had studied at the Collège de Saint-Hyacinthe and returned to the North-West in 1861, says in his "Memoirs" that Riel stopped for some time in Chicago with Louis Fréchette, and that the two wrote verse together, Fréchette in the manner of Victor Hugo, Riel in that of Alphonse de Lamartine.<sup>1</sup> There is no corroboration of this, except that throughout his life Riel wrote verse, and that Fréchette was in Chicago in 1867, editing a French newspaper, and that his *La voix d'un exilé*, published in 1868, was in the manner of Hugo's *Les Châtiments*.<sup>2</sup> If the episode did occur, did the fact that Fréchette was a bitter critic of Confederation, in self-imposed exile for his views, affect Riel's attitude towards Canada? And if Riel imitated Lamartine's verse, could he have been ignorant that Lamartine was a member of the Committee which headed the French Provisional Government of 1848? There is no evidence one way or the other; but such questions trouble the student of Riel's formative years, which are almost unrecorded. From Chicago, if indeed he stopped there, Riel went to St. Paul, where he resided in Little Canada, and to St. Anthony, or Minneapolis. In these two places he spent almost two years.<sup>3</sup> He supported himself by working as a clerk in the dry-goods store of one Gilbert Lachance, either in St. Paul or Minneapolis. There he was in touch with Red River, not merely by letters from family and friends, but also by talk with the *métis* of Little Canada and freighters down

<sup>1</sup> See below, Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.

<sup>2</sup> See Marcel Dugas, *Louis Fréchette, 1839-1908, un romantique canadien* (Montréal, 1946). Fréchette was in Chicago from 1865 to 1871, where he edited two French language papers.

<sup>3</sup> All dates from the time Riel left college are taken from his "Compte rendu" in the Riel Papers.

from Red River. There also he watched American politics, as he had observed those of Canada in Montreal.<sup>1</sup>

In the summer of 1868 he left Minneapolis and made his way to Red River by way of St. Joseph's, the *métis* settlement on the Pembina river, just south of the border, where the town of Valhalla now stands. He arrived in St. Boniface on July 26, 1869.<sup>2</sup> What prompted this return is not recorded. It may simply have been the completion of the journey from Montreal, carried out by stages; it may have been the necessity of supporting a widowed mother; but almost certainly it was as well an intention to play some part in the events certain before long to take place in Red River.

At any rate, Riel was soon in touch with Louis Schmidt, who says they talked politics as well as discussing old times. And there can be no doubt that he would be in touch with that other friend of college days, the Reverend L. R. Giroux, correspondent of *Le Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe*. Possibly Riel himself made some contribution, indirect if not direct, to this correspondence. That he was fully in sympathy with Taché's concern for the future of the *métis* and his desire to retard immigration until their future as a people could be secured, the letter to *Le Nouveau Monde* printed below, and initialled "L.R.", is clear evidence, if the letter is to be accepted as his.<sup>3</sup> In it are the words, "*Moi, je suis métis*" — "I am a half-breed myself." Riel was only one-eighth Indian by blood, but this defiant identification of the writer with his people is the authentic note of Riel's later career. He was the champion of his people; his mission was to ensure their survival.

Unless Riel be credited with this intention to lead his people and this belief in a mission to save them from disintegration, the consistency and firmness of the pattern of events in Red River from October, 1869, to August, 1870, is difficult to explain. Those events were to conform to a plan thoroughly

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C. (unnumbered mss). Thomas Spence, *Manitoba: Missing Links, or the Story of the Red River Troubles of 1869-70 Containing Interesting Speeches by Riel and Others* (Preface dated 1890), pp. 78-81, where Riel is quoted as comparing Canadian political conduct unfavourably with American.

<sup>2</sup> Riel Papers, "Compte rendu."

<sup>3</sup> See No. II below.



matured and resolutely pursued from beginning to end. The plan may have originated amongst Riel's clerical friends; for this there is some evidence. It may even, as was heatedly charged at the time, have had its source in Ottawa and Quebec; for this the present writer knows no evidence. His belief is that, extensive as Riel's debt no doubt was to his friends, both clerical and American, he himself was the originator and planner of the Resistance.

How this plan was formed may be inferred from Schmidt's *Memoirs* and the *Protestation* of October 16 printed below.<sup>1</sup> The majority of the *métis* had plenty of experience in organization; for the annual buffalo hunt was governed by an elected captain and council, and organized in tens, each ten with its captain. In this self-imposed organization the *métis* submitted to a firm discipline in camp and on the move for the duration of the hunt. The hunt was indeed the cadre of the nation.<sup>2</sup> And the *métis* had had an additional experience of self-organization during the events of 1868-1869 through their participation in the parochial and central organization of an Emergency Relief Committee. A familiar procedure, then, existed for the organization of common action: consultation amongst the elder or more energetic men; conference perhaps with their spiritual advisers; agreement on what was to be proposed to the people; the proposals put before parish meetings at the church doors after Mass, and if accepted, the election of representatives from each parish to constitute a council. The preliminary stages of this procedure were begun in mid-August, and the Settlement buzzed with rumours of meetings seeking to discover the terms of the transfer.<sup>3</sup>

While Riel and Bruce were arguing with their compatriots, two more personages arrived in Red River. On August 13 Oscar Malmros, newly appointed American consul to

<sup>1</sup> See No. v below and xv below.

<sup>2</sup> The organization of the buffalo hunt has often been described, but see P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 103, "Notes on Red River Troubles" written by Ritchot for Cartier, in which he explains how the hunt was the basis for the organization of the Resistance. A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, November 2, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 14, August 24 and August 31; Lestanc to Taché, September 5, 1869; *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, pp. 68-69, deposition of Ritchot.



Winnipeg, arrived in the Settlement.<sup>1</sup> He was loudly welcomed by the Americans, and cordially by every one else; the fathers at St. Boniface were particularly charmed by his gentlemanly manners and his learning. Malmros had been sent, not only to perform the normal consular duties, but also to play the part of discreet observer. His status, of course, forbade his taking any part in politics, and it is evident that his behaviour throughout was correct. But his appointment and his arrival at that particular juncture of affairs inevitably aroused the hopes of the American annexationists. And indeed it meant that any legitimate interest of the United States would not be neglected at a time when there was much discussion in political and official circles in the United States that Canada, or at least the North-West, might be ceded in settlement of the Alabama Claims.

The second personage to arrive was Colonel John Stoughton Dennis on August 20 at the head of a small party of surveyors.<sup>2</sup> Dennis and his party entered the colony on the same footing as Snow, that is, they came in anticipation of the transfer, with the permission of the local authorities. Dennis, like Snow, requested permission of Mactavish to carry out his instructions, which was granted.<sup>3</sup> He took pains to explain the nature of his duties<sup>4</sup> to all who cared to inquire; and he also made a call in person on the clerical authorities at St. Boniface. Existing holdings and claims, he stated, were not to be affected; his instructions were only to survey two or three townships for immediate settlement.<sup>5</sup> But, despite these precautions, Dennis's arrival, unlike that of Malmros, was clouded by the same mistake that Snow had made. He became friendly with Schultz and strengthened the growing belief that with the coming of Canadian rule the Canadian party would be in the ascendant.

<sup>1</sup> U.S.N.A., *Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I.* Malmros to Davis, August 15, 1869. See Begg's *Journal* below, p. 187, n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870, V (12), Dennis to McDougall, August 21, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> Permission had also been obtained for the surveys from the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company: A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, June 7, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> See below, Nos. IV and XVII; also A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 24, 1869.

<sup>5</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), McDougall to Dennis, July 10, 1869.

His explanations were, however, apparently well received. At St. Boniface, Father Lestanc was administrator of the diocese in the absence of Bishop Taché, who had left Red River in June to spend some time in Canada before proceeding to the Oecumenical Council at Rome. Lestanc professed himself well satisfied with Dennis's explanations, and undertook to transmit them to his congregation the following Sunday.<sup>1</sup> Riel called on Dennis and likewise professed himself satisfied. But Father Lestanc was persuaded by the Reverend Georges Dugas, director of St. Boniface College, not to perform his promise, on the ground that Dennis was laying a trap to compromise the clergy by having them assist him in work harmful to the interests of their people. Instead Riel spoke to the people of St. Boniface after Mass on the Sunday following his interview, declaring that the proposed surveys were a menace to their lands.<sup>2</sup>

In view of this opposition Dennis did not begin his surveys at Fort Garry, as he had planned, nor at Oak Point, where the *métis* strongly protested against them, but at the international border, from which point he began to run the Principal Meridian on which the survey of the North-West was to be based. Thus the excitement over the surveys seemed to die down for over a month. But in them Riel had found a cause with which to arouse the *métis*, and the clergy had seen the

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 22, 1869: see below, No. xviii.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Select Committee*, 1871, p. 136; deposition of Dennis. Little of Riel's oratory has survived, and that only in abbreviated reports. The following is such a report of what he said from the steps of the Cathedral on a later occasion than that narrated in the text: "He is reluctantly expected to have told his congregation that if they were as he could wish to see them, he should propose that by all means Mr. McDougall should be permitted to enter and comfortably establish himself in the Settlement. But he was aware that if that law his country would go on with their evil-doing without regarding their political rights, and the only means he could imagine as likely to rouse them was to force them to some such action as that contemplated. Once aroused he had little fear of them, and he added that if any one fell a martyr he should be dipped in his blood and used in all future engagements as their national flag. He said their opposition to impending changes must begin somewhere, and it had been determined to commence it by opposing the entrance of the future Governor." It is said that he professed the same sentiments on Monday before the Council, i.e. on October 25, which dates the speech as October 21. *Mineral Herald*, November 22, 1869.

confirmation of their fears of an immediate rush of settlers from Ontario. Both Dugas and Riel must have realized, following Dennis's explanation, that the Canadian surveyors had no intention of unsettling existing holdings or claims. What they feared, and what explains their duplicity, was the wholly Protestant and Upper Canadian composition of the survey party, so much of a piece with the whole agitation for the annexation of the North-West. What they questioned was not the carrying out of these particular surveys, but the right of Canada to make any survey at all before the transfer was completed.<sup>1</sup> If that right were conceded, there would be no ground on which to challenge the transfer itself and to demand that it take place only after the people of Red River had been consulted and their terms of union granted. The point, however, was too subtle for popular agitation; and accordingly Riel said, what succeeding historians have been naïve enough to copy, that the proposed surveys were a violation of existing property rights in land. This was not so; nor would the Canadian Government have been guilty of so egregious a blunder and injustice. But the young tribune felt, like many of his kind before and after, that his non-political and apathetic people would be roused only by a specific cry, such as that their lands were in danger. That was a sensitive issue, and Riel's influence grew rapidly.

During September the fears of Riel and of the clergy that the transfer was going to mean in fact the immediate occupation of the Red River valley by a flood of Protestant Upper Canadians, under a régime of their own making, were intensified by reports that the new governor was to be William McDougall. These reports were verified by McDougall's appointment to that post on September 28. It was a natural appointment. McDougall represented that element in Canada (the agrarian "Clear Grits" of western Upper Canada) which for over ten years had been demanding the annexation of the North-West as an area of Canadian

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 24, 1869. "On se demande de quel droit le gouvernement du Canada peut envoyer ici des arpenteurs, pour mesurer les terres." (People are asking by what right the Canadian Government can send surveyors here to lay off the land.)



colonization. He had publicly urged the annexation for years. Since 1867 he had fought a bitter battle against Lower Canadian and Maritime interests in the federal cabinet to bring about the implementation of Section 146 of the British North America Act, which provided for the acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory by the new Confederation.<sup>1</sup> McDougall's appointment also solved certain of the Prime Minister's difficulties in a re-organization of the cabinet which had been delayed for some months. But it showed the disposition of Macdonald and his colleagues to use the annexation of the North-West as a sop to McDougall and western Upper Canada. To the watchful clergy of St. Boniface and the *métis* of Red River it could only seem the final proof of their suspicion that the North-West was to be delivered unconditionally to Protestant Upper Canada. When the new governor came in, he too would be welcomed by Schultz; when he was installed, was it not logical to assume that Schultz and the Canadian party would have the ear of the Governor, as they had had the ear of Snow and Dennis?<sup>2</sup> Red River and the North-West would pass under the control, or at least the influence, of the long derided, long suspected, Canadian party; and the "Canadas", as the *métis* called the Upper Canadians, would be in the saddle.<sup>3</sup> Some of the latter, it seems, had been rash enough to boast that such would be the case, and that they would make the country their own, pushing the *métis* westward to the Saskatchewan.<sup>4</sup> Such arrogant boasting met its retaliation in slander. A baseless story, evidently originated by missionaries, was circulated to the

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 230, McDougall to Macdonald, June 5, 1867 and June 28, 1868; P.A.C., William McDougall, *The Red River Rebellion. Eight Letters to Hon. Joseph Howe* (Toronto, 1870), pp. 41-42.

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 24, 1869: "... il [Dennis] est venu à la Rivière-Rouge avec Schultz, il loge chez lui : il est anglais de Toronto, etc." (... he [Dennis] has come to Red River with Schultz, he is staying with him : he is English, from Toronto, etc.).

<sup>3</sup> A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 31, 1869; also Dom Bénoit, *Vie de Monsignor Taché*, II (Montreal, 1904), pp. 16-17, Taché to Cartier, October 7, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 11, deposition of Taché; p. 131, deposition of J. S. Lynch. There seems to have been some rough talk, but it was exaggerated in transmission.

effect that in the conclusion of a treaty with the Indians of Manitoulin Island in 1858, which was opposed by the Catholic missionaries, McDougall as the then Minister of Public Works had accepted responsibility for grave corruption and intimidation of the chiefs.<sup>1</sup> The situation created was not auspicious for the beginning of Canadian government, nor for the future of Anglo-French relations, in the North-West.

The suspicions of the clergy and *métis* were by no means baseless. Upper Canada was resolved to have the North-West, and to occupy it. There was, however, no intention to exclude Quebec or the Maritimes, nor to do any injustice to the natives of the North-West. But there was a rough assurance that the race was to the swift, and there was a firm resolve to allow no special privileges to any group. The nascent "Canada First" movement was an invisible network binding McDougall, through Mair, to Schultz.<sup>2</sup> And "Canada First", though not in principle an exclusively British and Protestant movement, was so in fact.

The fear of Upper Canadian domination was increased by news of the form of government to be established following the transfer. In May, 1869, the Canadian parliament had passed an Act for the provisional government of the North-West Territories, the Act to last until the next session of Parliament.<sup>3</sup> The government was to consist of a Lieutenant-Governor and an appointed council of not less than seven and not more than fifteen persons. Besides conducting the actual government of the Territories, the Governor was to advise the Canadian ministry, on the basis of the year's experience, of the best form for the permanent government of the Territories. But no attention was paid in Red River to the provisional and transitional character of this régime. Popular attention focused on the persons to be appointed, and on the question of whether residents in the Territories would have a majority on the council. McDougall's appointment as Governor was

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to John Rose, December 5, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> This was sensed by the clergy and *métis* of Red River; see Taché's assertion that they thought there was a "a plot" to reduce them to servitude in their own country; *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 21.

<sup>3</sup> *Canada: Statutes*, 1869, 32-33 Victoria, chap. 2.

reported in Red River as early as the end of August.<sup>1</sup> To match his appointment in the usual Canadian manner, a French Canadian was designated to be Secretary of the Council. But the French appointee was not a politician and not a man of McDougall's calibre. He was J. A. N. Provencher, a nephew of the first Roman Catholic bishop of the North-West, but not otherwise known in Red River. As his legal adviser McDougall had A. N. Richards, an Upper Canadian lawyer and a personal follower, who was appointed despite Macdonald's disapproval.<sup>2</sup> At the insistence of the Honourable Charles Tupper, and to give the Maritimes some recognition, Captain D. R. Cameron, R. A., Tupper's son-in-law, was named to the Council to look after military and police affairs. These were the only appointments arranged prior to the transfer; but in Red River they were taken to suggest that political influence in Canada, rather than local representation or local interests, would determine the composition of the Council. These fears were not warranted, on the face of the matter, as a dozen local people might still have been appointed, and no doubt a majority of the Council would have been chosen from among residents of the North-West. But the appointment of Schultz and a few of his partisans could well have put Provencher and any French representatives in a minority. In this matter Prime Minister Macdonald was much at fault, for he was convinced that the Indians and the Indian title were the first great issues to be faced in the North-West, and he was quite uninformed either of the intense political feeling in Red River, or of the state of civilization that remote colony had reached. He and Cartier, it seems reasonable to suggest, ought to have balanced McDougall by a French Canadian of like weight, and publicly announced that the remainder of the Council would be representative of the main elements of the population of the North-West.

Their failure to do so showed a want of political tact. Whether it revealed a more serious deficiency, a want of judgement, is to be doubted. It has become customary

<sup>1</sup> See below, No. IV; also A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to Smith, August 24, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 515, Macdonald to W. G. Walker, July 15, 1869.



amongst historians to recite the long list of "blunders" committed by the government of the Dominion in Red River, from the sending of the Snow party to the designation of McDougall as Lieutenant-Governor. To do so, however, is almost to repeat the contemporary criticisms of the Canadian ministry. In fact, neither the ministry nor its agents transgressed any rights of the Hudson's Bay Company or of the natives in the North-West. They were careful not to do so, but to proceed only with permission, and to explain their purposes fully and fairly. This McDougall also would have done on his arrival had he been allowed. The Canadian ministers erred indeed, but not through careless stupidity. Their error was to allow the belief to take shape that the North-West was regarded by them as a colony of Ontario, not of the Dominion as a whole. This it was that provoked the Resistance of the *métis*.

One member of the Canadian government, however, deliberately avoided adding to the impression that the North-West was to be a preserve for Ontario farmers and job-seekers. This was the Honourable Joseph Howe, Secretary of State for the Provinces, a Maritimer,<sup>1</sup> who arrived in the Settlement from St. Paul on October 9 on an unofficial visit made in order to see Red River for himself. He resolutely kept away from the baited net of Schultz, and declined his hospitality, which it would have been fatal to accept. Howe also refused to address a public meeting sponsored by the Canadian party. He did, however, talk earnestly with Mactavish, and urged Lestanc to use his influence for moderation. In private conversation he endeavoured to re-assure his hearers that Canada would speedily grant political rights, if the people of Red River would stand up for them. As his critics alleged later, Howe may have alluded to Nova Scotia's recent success in winning "better terms" in Confederation, yet there is no reason to doubt that he meant, not to foster rebellion, as was charged, but only to re-assure

<sup>1</sup> Howe suggested to Nova Scotian correspondents, perhaps jocularly, that he was going to the North-West, to discover if there were openings for Nova Scotians there; P.A.C., Howe Papers, Howe to Archibald, August 6, 1869; Howe to Captain James A. Fraser, 7, August 1869.

those anxious about the future. He left Red River on October 16, and met McDougall as a storm was breaking on the bleak plains of Minnesota. They could do no more than exchange greetings, but from St. Paul Howe wrote McDougall a letter warning him of the possibility of trouble, which revealed that he had assessed the situation very accurately. He warned that Schultz had been posing "as the representative and confidential agent of the Canadian government", and that it would be a mistake to become identified with his party. Howe hoped the priests would counsel moderation amongst that "peculiar people", the half-breeds, and was generally sensible and friendly.<sup>1</sup> Whether McDougall received the letter or not, it makes baseless the later charges that Howe had deliberately let him walk into a trap.

## IV

Yet even while Howe was in the Settlement the organization of the Resistance was nearing completion. The party of action among the *métis* was indeed already resolved to act. They felt it was desirable, however, to have the whole Settlement resist as a united body, if possible, and early in October Riel and Bruce were sent to a meeting at the home of Magistrate Thomas Sinclair in St. Andrew's. There it was decided by the English half-breeds, contrary to the arguments of the two *métis*, not to oppose McDougall's entry.<sup>2</sup> Though they had failed to gain the support of the English half-breeds, the *métis* none the less decided to act alone and to challenge the right of Canada to enter the North-West without the consent of its people. The Canadian surveys now furnished an occasion for this challenge. Early in October the survey of the Principal Meridian was completed from the United States

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Howe Papers, Howe to McDougall, October 31, 1869; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, McDougall to Macdonald, November 13, 1869, in which he writes that Howe did his best to convince Lestanc that those of Catholic faith would not suffer by the transfer. Howe indeed went at least to the length of asking Riel, through Lestanc, to visit him. P.A.C., Secretary of State for the Provinces, 1870, 43, Lestanc to Howe, October 16, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.M., James Taylor, *The Veterans of the Fur Trade Association* (Prince Albert, 1906), p. 9; *Nor'Wester and Pioneer*, October 26, 1869.

boundary northward across the Assiniboine. Dennis then sent a sub-party under Major Hart to run a base-line west to Portage la Prairie for local surveys there, and one under Major Webb to run a base-line eastward to Oak Point for the survey of one or two townships projected there. These were the two places where the first immigrants of 1870 were expected to settle. Webb began his line on the Meridian a few miles south of Headingly, and ran it eastward into St. Vital, Riel's home parish. Before the chainmen had reached the river lots on the Red, and while they were still in the "hay privilege" in the second two miles to the rear, their progress was challenged on October 11 by André Nault, later one of the secondary leaders of the Resistance.<sup>1</sup> Webb endeavoured to explain that he merely wished to traverse the lots, but Nault would not listen, or could not understand. He summoned neighbours to his aid, and led by Louis Riel, they stopped the survey by standing on the chain. Obeying orders given him by Dennis to be followed in the event of opposition, Webb withdrew his party to the north of the Assiniboine. Dennis, Governor Mactavish, and Dr. William Cowan, chief factor and magistrate, then attempted to persuade Riel to abandon the resistance to the surveys. They failed, and no legal proceeding was instituted.

This first overt act of the Resistance of the *métis* was not the result of indignant natives running out to stop an alien survey of their individual holdings. If that view is taken, the understanding of subsequent acts of the *métis* is distorted from the first. The act was probably premeditated, and it was certainly of general and symbolic significance. Riel and his neighbours were not taken by surprise, nor were they acting merely to defend the limits of their farms. They were acting in concert, in a manner at least discussed beforehand, to protest against what they believed an improperly authorized act. What they protested against was an essential part of a general plan of survey designed for the whole of the North-West. They were challenging the authority of Canada to conduct any survey at all anywhere in the North-West, and particularly in that block of land between the Assiniboine and

<sup>1</sup> L. A. Prud'homme, "André Nault," *Transactions Royal Society of Canada*, III, 1928.



the border which the *métis* regarded as belonging by custom to their "nation".<sup>1</sup>

Such was the political significance of the stopping of the survey, and it was the signal for concerted action to prevent the Honourable William McDougall from entering the North-West. McDougall was expected to arrive a few days after October 11, and the swiftness with which action was taken against him indicates that preparation had been made. The leading men had agreed amongst themselves, the parishes had been consulted. Now, between October 15 and 19, representatives were named to a National Committee,<sup>2</sup> of which John Bruce was elected president and Louis Riel secretary. An oath of mutual loyalty was taken for the purpose of acting as protectors of the rights of the people. A *Protestation* proclaiming the loyalty of the *métis* to the Crown and their resolve to maintain their rights was drawn up on October 6 as a letter to the editor of the *Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe*, presumably for want of a French press in Red River.<sup>3</sup> All this, or a great part of it, had been done by the time that the *métis* began to assemble in arms at the crossing of the Rivière Sale by the church of St. Norbert on the trail to Pembina. There they raised a barrier across the public highway, and proceeded to subject all travellers to search and questioning. The Resistance had begun, for the *métis* were endeavouring to stop communication between the Settlement and the on-coming Governor-designate, preparatory to preventing the entry of McDougall himself.

Before the course of events is outlined further, certain questions require examination. The fact that the Reverend N. J. Ritchot, parish priest of St. Norbert, allowed the leaders of the Resistance to use his presbytery as headquarters, and

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12). Dennis's memo on stopping of surveys. No satisfactory reason was given "beyond the assertion that the Canadian Government had no right to make surveys in the Territory without the express permission of the people of the Settlement": A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, October 12, 1869. The men who stopped the survey told Mactavish they knew it would do no harm (the survey) but was a way of letting Canada know it had no right in the country; a correspondent from Red River asked, in the *Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe*, January 7, 1870, if the surveys were allowed, to whom would the country belong?

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, pp. 68-69, deposition of Ritchot.

<sup>3</sup> See No. v below.

appeared in public amongst them, raised then, and raises again in this narrative, the question of the relation of the Roman Catholic clergy to the initiation of the Resistance. It is to be remembered that Bishop Taché had been absent since June, and both clergy and laity missed his authority and counsel. The Bishop had anticipated trouble and had twice warned Cartier, only to be put off by that ever-confident politician with the assurance that everything had been foreseen and provided for. The precautions taken seem to have consisted of the despatch of three hundred and fifty Enfield rifles with McDougall,<sup>1</sup> and these were amongst the things looked for by the *métis* guard at the St. Norbert barricade. But the prelate did not anticipate the armed resistance which had now begun, or he would not have continued his journey to Rome. The repeated charge that his letters from Canada led his clergy to inspire the rising can be dismissed, as documentary proof is lacking for even the least injurious construction of the charge.<sup>2</sup>

The truth seems to be that every member of the clergy acted according to his conscience and the circumstances of his charge. Father Lestanc, as Administrator, was spokesman for the clergy, and his position was at all times correct. Perhaps it was easier for him to be so, if as a Frenchman of France he did not feel quite that kinship with the *métis* which the Canadian priests clearly did, and which was never concealed or in doubt.<sup>3</sup> It was he who laid down the policy to be pursued, even before the stopping of the surveys. The clergy were to take no part in

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), McDougall to General Hart, November 4, 1869. News of the rifles reached Red River ahead of McDougall, and it was in search of these that the *métis* at the barricade at St. Norbert ransacked all incoming carts. The rifles might have been a decisive element in the troubles had they reached Red River. McDougall, however, as a precaution, sent them back to Fort Abercrombie in Dakota Territory.

<sup>2</sup> The writer, that is, has seen no letters from Taché to Lestanc conveying his undoubted irritation. There may well have been such letters—it would be only natural—but that the Bishop would deliberately inspire resistance is not to be believed. Macdonald's comment is to be noted: "Unfortunately the majority of the Priests up there are from Old France, and their sympathies are not with us. And to add to our troubles, Cartier rather snubbed Bishop Taché when he was here on his way to Rome. Langevin thought that he had made it all right but it appears now that the Bishop conveyed his feelings of irritation to his representative—a person from Old France." (P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to Rose, November 24, 1869.)

<sup>3</sup> Father Jean-Marie Lestanc was born in Brittany in 1830.

politics, and were not even to talk politics amongst themselves, much less with their flocks.<sup>1</sup> The Church, in short, was to be politically neutral, and the clergy were to keep to their spiritual functions. This was a correct and proper decision, but its results were not those which might have been expected. When the Resistance began, the spiritual authority of the clergy was not used against it. Neither the pulpit nor private influence were used to oppose it; nor at any time was any member of the Resistance denied the ministrations of the clergy for participation in the movement. When the aid of the Church was asked to persuade the *métis* to cease their opposition to McDougall's entry, Father Lestanc refused it, on the ground that the Church ought not to interfere in a matter outside its spiritual jurisdiction, and also on the ground that it would be useless to do so.<sup>2</sup> He refused, in short, to compromise the Church in the eyes of the *métis*, by opposing this popular movement.

Neither did Lestanc rebuke or discipline the Reverend N. J. Ritchot, *curé* of St. Norbert, for his open association with the *métis* in arms. The other sympathetic clergy, the Reverend Georges Dugas, the Reverend J. Allard, and the Reverend L. R. Giroux, were allowed great latitude in defining their functions as spiritual advisers. All three believed completely in the justice of the Resistance, as indeed did Lestanc. Dugas was completely informed of what was going on, as was Ritchot, who appeared in public as an accepted counsellor of the *métis*. Giroux and Allard became chaplains to the *métis* in arms. What may have passed between these clergy and Riel and other leaders at the beginning of the Resistance is unknown; it seems to be beyond doubt that they were informed of what was planned and that they both advised and assisted in the organization of the movement Riel had begun. In short, Riel and his clerical friends were at one in the decision to resist Canada.

<sup>1</sup> See No. iv below, A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 29, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Lestanc to Taché, October 23, 1869. "Pour aller arrêter le peuple, il faudrait savoir que son opposition au Canada est coupable devant Dieu ou désavantageuse au pays." (To try to stop the people, it would be necessary to know that its resistance to Canada is sinful in the eyes of God or to the disadvantage of the country.)



Three things seem to be clear, then: the first is that the leaders of the Resistance were confident they would not be opposed by their clergy, and this knowledge was in itself an encouragement to proceed; the second is that Lestanc's official neutrality also acted as an encouragement, since what the church did not actively oppose, it might be supposed not to disapprove; the third is that the actively sympathetic priests knew what was planned, and approved it. There is authority to the contrary, it is true. The Reverend N. J. Ritchot, for example, at the time of the raising of the barrier, is said to have met three of his parishioners proceeding on their way armed. He asked if they were going hunting. No, they said, they were going to war. "Oh," he said, "then it must be a little war, since there are only three of you!"—"No, father," they replied, "this is more serious than you think."<sup>1</sup> And it was; but there can be little doubt that the enigmatic Ritchot was merely having a joke, and that none knew better what was going on.

The Roman Catholic clergy, in short, did not officially sanction the organization of the Resistance; but they knew the substance of what was afoot, and entirely approved it. When the Resistance had begun, Ritchot publicly supported it, as the others did later. Their sympathies were naturally engaged, and they believed in the justice of the cause in which the *métis* rose, as do French and Catholic historians to this day. When the Resistance began, they had to decide whether to withdraw from their people, or as their spiritual advisers to remain with them. Dugas, Giroux, Ritchot and Allard chose the latter course. Their motives, which were not to lose touch with their people and to be in a position to counsel moderation, must be respected. Nor is it easy to impugn their judgement, for Riel might well have carried the *métis* with him, despite clerical opposition, as Lestanc believed he would. But it was quite inevitable that the charge of clerical inspiration should have been made then and believed thereafter.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prud'homme, *Ritchot*, p. 68.

<sup>2</sup> The extent of the involvement of Dugas and Ritchot in launching the Resistance, and the former's estimate of their rôle in it, is to be learned from the following translation of a letter from Dugas to a friend. It was provoked by a statement of

Another significant but obscure matter is that of the composition of Riel's forces. It is customary to speak of the "movement of the *métis*" and the "half-breed rebellion"; but it is important to remember that a considerable proportion of the *métis*, among them many of the most respected and best established, refused to accept the leadership of Riel, whom they considered a poor and youthful upstart. Another group alternately supported and opposed him. Was there any significant distinction between these two groups, and that which supported Riel? The records are scanty and of little assistance. There are indications, however, that by and large, the better educated and better off *métis* were either dubious of Riel's methods, or passively opposed to them, and that his followers were the tripmen and the hunters, rather than the traders and the farmers. It would seem indeed that the first recruits were from the turbulent crews of the Portage la Loche boat brigades, noted for some years for their mutinous spirit,

Archbishop Langevin at the funeral of Ritchot in 1905 to the effect that Ritchot had nothing to do with the organization of the Resistance.

"I have read *Les Cloches de Saint-Boniface*. In the biographical notice of Mgr. Ritchot it is said that he did nothing to move the *métis* to protest against the Canadian government. It is false, entirely false. It would be better to say nothing of the part played by M. Ritchot in the rising of the *métis* than to give the impression that he was only a moderator and source of good advice. In reality he was the soul of the movement. It was he who launched it and without him the movement would not have taken place. . . .

"It was M. Ritchot and I who not only guided but who drove on that opposition to the Canadian government—this is the real truth. I did not say it in my book because all truth is not suitable for publication. I say it to you. The ignorant *métis* would never have thought of vindicating their constitutional rights if M. Ritchot and I had not made them aware of them. *Without M. Ritchot and me the movement remains inexplicable.*"

No. 2570 (by kind permission) Archives du Collège Sainte-Marie, Fonds-Immaculée-Conception, Dugas to Fr. Joseph Grenier, April 15, 1905. A slightly inaccurate copy appears in *La Revue d'histoire de l'Amérique française*, III (1), Juin, 1949, pp. 114-117.

So categorical a statement may seem to be decisive. It is judged not to be so, because (1) the statement was written thirty-five years after the event; (2) Dugas possessed a flair for inaccuracy; (3) he was a vain and garrulous man; (4) the cautious view expressed by Bishop Machray on the spot seems to be more in accord with other contemporary evidence, the character of the Resistance, and the temperament and capacity of Riel. See No. XXI below.

and from the Saskatchewan and York brigades.<sup>1</sup> These rough men, like their fellows, the tripmen of the cart brigades, were seasonal wage-earners. All were without work after October, when the boat brigades returned to Fort Garry, as did all but the last cart brigades from St. Paul and Fort Ellice. The boatmen were also Hudson's Bay Company men, on whom the Company was dependent for the movement of goods and furs in the season of open water. The Company was accustomed to engage them again in January, when the men began to require credit against the trips of the following summer in order to support their families. The summer hunt also returned to the Settlement in late September or early October, and those who did not set forth on the fall hunt in October, or leave to winter on the plains, would be idle in their parishes.<sup>2</sup> There would for this reason be plenty of men available in October, and it was ironical that McDougall should have approached Red River in the season when resistance was most easily organized.

It would seem, then, that the pattern of the Resistance was a common one, the leader an enthusiastic, partially educated, unemployed young patriot, the following a mass movement of simple and easily persuaded men, accustomed to rough ways in dispute and to bearing arms. And there are indications that the rougher element among the *métis* formed the backbone of Riel's forces, men who might be persuaded but could not be disciplined except by superior force.

Yet it will be noted that these same men served as volunteers, without pay, providing their own arms and provisions for over two weeks. Their conduct throughout the ten months of the Resistance was also exemplary, except for two significant occasions when impatience and exasperation on their part gave a tragic turn to events. However good the conduct of a force

<sup>1</sup> A.H.B.C., A 11/99, J. J. Hargrave to C. M. Lampson, February 8, 1870, in which Hargrave says men of the Portage la Loche brigade were amongst the first insurgents; see also J. J. Gunn, *Echoes of the Red* (Toronto, 1930), p. 58.

<sup>2</sup> This was noted by contemporaries, a correspondent in the *St. Paul Pioneer*, November 17, 1869; and one in the *Globe*, December 21, 1869; U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, J. W. Taylor to Hamilton Fish, January 20, 1870: "... it was easy on returning from that expedition [the October or fall hunt] to organize the armed bands which took possession of Fort Pembina and Garry." Taylor makes the return of the fall hunt too early.



made up of such volunteers, its discipline would be only such as the men chose to tolerate.

Such was the force that Bruce and Riel raised. It was a rude, even primitive, following, but hardy and brave, equipped with horse and muzzle-loading buffalo gun and possessing from hunt and trip an ingrained habit of common action and an instinctive tactical skill which made them a formidable force. A few score resolute men, whose numbers might be increased to five or six hundred, had seized the main highway into the North-West at a season when winter would confirm their possession of it for at least eight months.

These men were also, as we have seen,<sup>1</sup> the only force in the Settlement which might be called military, and on them the Governor and Council of Assiniboia had actually relied for the defence of the Settlement since the withdrawal of the garrison detachment of the Royal Canadian Rifles in 1861. Now the fact that they had risen in arms to resist the entry of McDougall meant that the authorities had no adequate means with which to re-open the highways and suppress what was at the very least a most serious breach of the peace. The sheriff and constables of Assiniboia could not do so. The only possible recourse was to the raising of a *posse comitatus*, which would be to pit one half of the Settlement against the other and plunge Red River into civil war. When Walton F. Hyman, a Canadian of London, Ontario, swore an affidavit before Magistrate Dr. William Cowan as to the facts of the stopping of the highway at St. Norbert,<sup>2</sup> the Doctor declined to act, that is, to order what he could not enforce. The Council of Assiniboia, when confronted with the fact of the armed rising, at first tried, through the two *métis* members of Council, Roger Goulet and William Dease, to persuade the *métis* at the barricade to cease their blocking of the highway and disperse. The Council also summoned Bruce and Riel to attend the session of October 25, and endeavoured, without success, to persuade them to cease their resistance to McDougall's entry.<sup>3</sup> When this effort

<sup>1</sup> Cf. p. 16 above.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), Affidavit of W. F. Hyman, October 22, 1869. Hyman's name was, of course, omitted at the time of printing.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., Minutes of the Council of Assiniboia, October 25, 1869.

failed, the Council felt that all that could be attempted had been done, and decided to advise McDougall to remain at Pembina. The government of Assiniboia could only be what it had been for years, "a benevolent despotism tempered by riot."<sup>1</sup> Thus early a pattern was set which was to recur throughout the Resistance, for the *métis* could not be forced to desist without civil war, and from that at the final test every one shrank except the "loyalists".

From barring the highway at St. Norbert, the *métis*, acting through their National Committee, went on to post guards at the other river crossings along the Red to Pembina at the border, and to patrol the plains to the westward to intercept those who might try to turn the outposts. When McDougall arrived at Pembina with his party on October 30 and advanced the remaining two miles over the frontier to seek shelter for the night in the Pembina Post of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was met by Janvier Ritchot, a *métis*, and given a brief note signed by Bruce and Riel, as President and Secretary of the National Committee, ordering him not to enter the North-West Territories "without a special permission from the Committee".<sup>2</sup> The last clause may have contained a hint of readiness to negotiate, but McDougall either did not note it, or chose to disregard it, and dismissed Ritchot curtly. On the following day an armed and mounted party arrived, led by Ambroise-Didyme Lépine. They allowed McDougall to pass the night at the Post with his party; but in the morning, with a threat to use force, they insisted on his returning to the American side of the line, although two of the party, J. A. N. Provencher and Captain D. R. Cameron, were allowed to proceed until turned back at St. Norbert. At Pembina the discomfited McDougall rented houses from Frank Larose and Michael Hayden. Later he built a log cabin, and settled down to await the date of the transfer, which he had been informed was to take place on December 1, and to see whether developments within Red River might make it possible for him to complete his journey and take up his duties. He behaved throughout with restraint and dignity in a painfully humiliating

<sup>1</sup> Isaac Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers* (Toronto, 1913), p. 160.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12).

situation, ejected from the Territories of which he was governor-designate, and forced to live in close proximity to the watchful friends of the *métis* in Pembina, the Rolettes, the Caviliers and Enos Stutsman.

The first phase of the Resistance was now ended. The right of Canada to send officials into the North-West before the transfer was completed had been challenged by the stopping of the surveys and by denying entry to the governor-designate. Riel had made certain that the Upper Canadian agents of the Canadian government would have no undue advantage when the transfer took place, and in particular that Schultz would not capture McDougall as he had captured Snow and Dennis. To do this Riel had committed acts which were gravely illegal. In extenuation he pleaded loyalty to the Crown,<sup>1</sup> and declared that the Resistance was only to acts of agents of Canada who as yet had no jurisdiction in the North-West. Their acts, he alleged, threatened directly or by implication the rights of his people in the soil, and their rights as British subjects and as a nation.<sup>2</sup> In their defence, Riel had incurred grave risks, but he had seized control of the situation.

## V

In the second phase of the movement, from November 1 to November 21, the interest is strategic rather than legal. Riel and his *métis* lay at St. Norbert, between McDougall, immobilized at Pembina, and the now considerable Canadian element, swollen by newcomers during the summer, in Winnipeg and Oak Point and Portage la Prairie. The Canadians now had much difficulty in communicating with McDougall. Travelling by way of Headingly and the trail to St. Joseph, Dennis did manage to evade the patrols and reach Pembina on November 1. McDougall did succeed in sending a Major

<sup>1</sup> The *Globe*, January 6, 1870, "Justitia" from Red River, December 17, 1869, wrote that Riel "declares his loyalty to the Queen, but cannot see his people trampled on".

<sup>2</sup> By "droit de gens", a term no doubt derived from Dugas, Riel meant the rights of the *métis* "as men—a people—a nation. In that capacity we have been ignored." *New Nation*, April 2, 1870.



James Wallace, formerly with Snow, into the Settlement to collect information. Snow and some private individuals, amongst whom was Schultz, were able to get letters through by half-breed or Indian runners. But the *métis* made systematic communication very difficult. The result was that the "loyalists", as they called themselves in the firm conviction that the *métis* were rebels in arms against constitutional authority, were for the most part left to act on their own.

The Canadians, however, had been caught by surprise, and found it difficult to overtake events. Both their position and their numbers required that they endeavour to have the constituted authorities act, rather than take action themselves. Those authorities were, as indicated above, both powerless and nerveless. Nor was Riel content to lose the initiative, or simply to continue lying passively between McDougall and his Canadian supporters in Red River. There was a yet stronger position he could win by bold action: Upper Fort Garry, the headquarters of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land and seat of the government of Assiniboia. The fort, with its stone walls and bastions, its cannon and stand of small arms, was a place of some strength, at least in comparison with anything that could be brought against it in Red River. Above all, its stores of pemmican made it the only means of keeping on foot any considerable body of men in a North-West winter.<sup>1</sup> Like the force at St. Norbert, moreover, it too would sever the lines of communication between Pembina and Winnipeg. As Red River was the key to the North-West, Fort Garry was in the conditions of 1869 the key to Red River.

The fort was not garrisoned, but was occupied only by the usual officers, and the clerical and servant staff of a major Hudson's Bay Company post. The officer in charge, Chief Factor Dr. William Cowan, was warned by Chief Constable James Mulligan of Assiniboia, a pensioner, that the seizure of the fort was planned by the *métis*. Cowan, with the approval

<sup>1</sup> G. R. Huyshe, *The Red River Expedition* (London, 1871), p. 8. Huyshe as a soldier was right to note the strategic significance of the fort and its provisions, but wrong to suggest that the danger was only ostensible, and that the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company acquiesced in the capture. In the situation which was developing either McDougall and the Canadians, or Riel and the *métis*, had to control Fort Garry if they were to carry out their plans.

of Mactavish, declined to take the only possible action for its defence, the calling out of the pensioners resident in Red River and the swearing in of special constables.<sup>1</sup> Had Cowan done as Mulligan urged, the fort might perhaps have been held, but only at the risk of a siege which would have developed into civil war in the Settlement. Mulligan's information, however, was correct; on November 2, a force of *métis*, reported to be from two hundred to four hundred men, approached under cover of the trees on the south bank of the Assiniboine. As opportunity offered, they crossed the stream casually in groups of three and four and dropped into the walled enclosure of the fort. When enough had entered, the gates were seized and the walls and bastions manned. Thus easily was the key to Red River seized. When Cowan protested, Riel assured him that the coup had been carried out to avert a danger.<sup>2</sup> He did not specify what the danger was, but there can be no doubt that he had seized the fort to prevent the Canadians from doing the same,<sup>3</sup> and to secure a valuable symbol of authority. There is no evidence that the Canadians contemplated any such action, but there can be little question that in the logic of the situation which the Resistance of the *métis* had created, either they or their opponents would be compelled to seize Fort Garry. Riel, with the initiative still his, and with the boldness and resolution which were beginning to mark him, had acted first. By his act he had put himself in a position to dominate Red River; and since he could now keep his men under arms indefinitely, only a general rising of the English-speaking settlers could put him down. If that failed to occur, only a military expedition from Canada could overthrow him, an event that could not happen for a long eight months. In the interval much could happen: Canada could be brought to grant terms; the United States could intervene. To all outward appearances, unless overthrown from within the Settlement, Riel could choose

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 114, evidence of W. R. Bown.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 128, evidence of Dr. Cowan. Cowan and Mactavish had decided the fort could not be defended as "those who were best affected to the Company [were] then in insurrection." C.S.P., (12), Mactavish to McDougall, November 9, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxviii below.

either alternative; and this was the diplomatic strength he drew from the strategic success of November 2.

The seizure of Fort Garry was an act of even graver illegality than the barring of the highway at St. Norbert. The former was a serious breach of the peace, the latter a direct defiance of constituted authority. Yet Riel and the *métis* did not seek to overthrow the old government of Assiniboia. In fact its courts sat and its laws were enforced throughout the second phase of the Resistance. They sought to prevent the institution of a new government, and their illegal acts were designed to put them in a position to do so.<sup>1</sup> The justification they pleaded was a political one, that their rights were about to be invaded, and that they were entitled to defend them. That any rights they actually enjoyed were to be violated is extremely doubtful; but there can be no doubt of the genuineness of their fears, inflamed as they were by dislike and suspicion of Schultz and the "Canadas". Riel had, as has been said, incurred grave risks in order to develop the second stage of his programme.

This was a strategic or political stage, and in his plan it was to precede and introduce a third stage, that of negotiation with Canada for terms of union. Riel's full programme was to become evident in the two weeks following the seizure of Fort Garry. His aim was to bring about a political union of the various groups in the Settlement to negotiate with McDougall, or with the Canadian Government, about the terms on which the transfer would be completed. The united action that he and Bruce had failed to obtain early in October, they were seeking again, now that unaided they had repelled McDougall, and made a Canadian *coup de main* impossible by their own seizure of Fort Garry.

Accordingly, on November 6 a notice was issued inviting the English parishes and the village of Winnipeg to elect representatives to meet on November 16 with the French

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Diaries of Dr. William Cowan, November 2, 1869. Sir John Macdonald explained to the Select Committee of 1874 that the ministry (*i.e.* Macdonald as Minister of Justice) thought the above acts of the *métis* rebellious, but chose, in the circumstances and to avoid incurring the more serious consequences of holding them treasonable, to regard them as very aggravated breaches of the peace: *Report of the Select Committee of 1874*, p. 102. A. S. Morton in *A History of the Canadian West to 1870-71*, chap. VI, holds that there was no rebellion, only breaches of the peace.



Council, as it was now called, to discuss the affairs of Red River.<sup>1</sup> The English-speaking settlers had viewed the bold and concerted acts of their French compatriots with varied feelings. The Canadian party were indignant; the sober Scots and white population generally were shocked; and amongst the half-breed majority there was not a little sympathy and not a little satisfaction at seeing the plans of the over-confident Canadians disrupted. But if there was little disposition amongst the majority to oppose the acts of the French, there was no disposition to join them. When the invitation was published, therefore, the majority were inclined to consider it carefully. After discussions in parish meetings, it was decided in all the parishes that there would be no harm in having representatives meet with the French Council, to argue the situation with them and perhaps bring them back to legal courses. The representatives elected by the meetings were in some, if not all, instances bound by written instructions designed to avoid any identification of their constituents with the past acts of the *métis*, and to prevent the representative from committing his parish to any similar course of action in the future. The representatives elected were a fair sample of the English half of the Settlement, except, of course that no "loyalist" or extreme opponent of the *métis* was elected. There were two annexationists, Sheriff Henry McKenney and Hugh F. O'Loone, the representatives of Winnipeg. The rest were men of average calibre, with the exception of the aged Donald Gunn, naturalist and historian, from St. Andrew's, and James Ross, the brilliant but unstable half-breed son of Alexander Ross, who was the one man amongst the English superior to Riel in intellect and education. The twelve representatives, with doubtful minds and limited powers, met with the Council of the *métis* in the Courthouse outside the walls of Fort Garry on November 16.

While Riel and his Council were attempting to create a political union of the Settlement to negotiate terms, and the neutral English were considering what they should do, McDougall and the "loyalists" had not been inactive. The gist of all the intelligence reaching McDougall convinced him

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal* below, pp. 163-164.

that he should remain at Pembina, and this he was resolved to do until the *métis* were dispersed by a resolute show of force from within the Settlement.<sup>1</sup> Both McDougall and his supporters were convinced that the Resistance would not have occurred without the active help of the Catholic clergy and the passive acquiescence of the authorities of the Hudson's Bay Company. In this they were largely, but not wholly mistaken. But they were wholly mistaken in their belief that the *métis* would be cowed by a show of force, or indeed that a force capable of equal combat could be raised, once Fort Garry had been seized.

The first thing for McDougall to do, however, was to persuade the local authorities to issue a proclamation ordering the *métis* to desist from their illegal acts, thus placing them in the position of having either to lay down their arms, or to commit a rebellious act by continuing in insurrection. This Governor Mactavish was reluctant to do, for he knew that only persuasion could induce the *métis* to desist, and persuasion had already failed. McDougall wrote urging him to issue a proclamation;<sup>2</sup> and a petition to the same effect was forwarded by the "loyalists" of the Settlement.<sup>3</sup> Mactavish at last reluctantly complied with the "loyalist" petition, and on November 16, the day the Convention met, issued a proclamation drafted by Judge Black of Assiniboia.<sup>4</sup> The Convention had assembled when the Governor's private secretary, J. J. Hargrave, brought them a copy of the proclamation. The English delegates wanted it read at once, but Riel dissented. Finally, it was agreed to read it at the end of the session. The Convention then debated as to whether any legal action could be taken until the opposition to McDougall's entry was ended. Finally, no conclusion having been reached, James Ross, who had shown himself the spokesman for the English as definitely as Riel was for the French, moved that the proclamation be read. It proved to be an elaborate plea to the *métis* to lay down their arms and disperse. No penalties for failure to do so were

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., (12), McDougall to Howe, November 13, 1869 (A).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, McDougall to Mactavish, November 2, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* The petition was dated November 12.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* See also Begg's *Journal*, November 16, 1869.

stated or implied, but the legal effect was clear. As Ross put it, any further act of resistance would be an act of rebellion.<sup>1</sup>

Here was a crisis for Riel. His whole programme was threatened with disaster. His protestation of loyalty to the Crown of October 6, the careful avoidance of any act directed against the existing government, and the claim to be doing no more than asserting the rights of British subjects, seemed likely to collapse. For he had carried the *métis* so far only with the assurance that what they were doing was not disloyal, but was politically justifiable. He knew they would not consent to go on in deliberate rebellion.

What was he to do? His own report of his reply to Ross's pressing of the legal dilemma vividly illustrates how he sought on the spur of the moment to find some straw in the proclamation at which he could clutch, some particular phrase in it which he could use to retain the confidence of the *métis* and avert the collapse of his programme. He found it in a concluding generality in which the Governor had said that if constitutional means were used, "incalculable good" might come out of the recent events in Red River, and "immeasurable evil" if not. Desperately Riel turned the former phrase to his advantage, declaring that indeed much good might arise out of the recent events, if those who supported him persisted in their present course! It was not good reasoning, or good law; but as repartee to retrieve a desperate political situation it was clever. The Convention then adjourned until the next day, when the debate was resumed as to what action was desirable. Nothing was decided, and the Convention adjourned to allow the General Quarterly Court to use the Court House until November 22. The proclamation confronted Riel with the dilemma whether to obey it and see all his startling success fade, or to defy it and go on in open rebellion, but he thought he saw a way out. He convinced himself that a third course was open, and he made the decision to pursue it with or without the English. That course was to proclaim a provisional government, if necessary by the action of the *métis* alone, and to treat with Canada on that basis. It was a decision which rested on the anticipation

<sup>1</sup> For the records of the November Convention, see No. VIII below; also No. X.



of the failure, for the time being at least, of his programme of political union and united negotiation of a settlement with Canada. But it revealed the resolution of which the twenty-five year old *métis* was capable; and it carried the Resistance into its next or third phase, that of the proclamation of a provisional government.

## VI

When the Convention re-assembled on November 22, the discussion was resumed without progress being made. The English would not commit themselves until they had discovered specifically what the French wanted; and the French were not prepared to declare themselves, whether of policy, or for actual lack of agreement among themselves, is not clear.

Riel spent that night, by his own statement, persuading the French Council to agree to declare a provisional government themselves, and to proceed with or without the English.<sup>1</sup> He wrestled in argument through the night to convince them that to do so would not be rebellion, since the provisional government was not meant to usurp the authority of the Crown, or to replace the government of Assiniboia, of which the existence was to terminate in a matter of days if it had not already done so, but merely to resist the establishment of Canadian authority. This authority, he presumably argued, could have no moral or legal basis until it had acknowledged the rights which the *métis* claimed both as British subjects, and as a "nation". At length he prevailed, and the *métis* were committed by their Council to the proclamation of a provisional government, whether the English concurred or not. Such a government would be, primarily, not a means of continuing the Resistance, but the agency by which negotiations with Canada for terms of union would be conducted.

The decision was at once followed on November 23 by the

<sup>1</sup> The above narrative is based on Riel's own notes in No. VIII below. The proclamation of the Provisional Government had been anticipated by the American Consul; U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, November 6, 1869, No. 14.

seizure of the books and cash of the Government of Assiniboia.<sup>1</sup> The *métis* thus transformed the occupation of Fort Garry into the supersession of the Government of Assiniboia, even though a provisional government was not yet proclaimed. When the Convention met again on the morning of November 23, the resolution of the French was announced, and the co-operation of the English invited. The English delegates asked to be allowed to consult their parishes, and December 1 was set as the date of the next session.

The revelation of what Riel was resolved on, and what he had persuaded the *métis* to accept, caused some dismay and confusion amongst the English community. Fearful as they had been of seeming to condone the illegal acts of the French, they were now more fearful of being committed to what well might prove an act of an even graver kind.

While the English parishes were discussing whether they should authorize their representatives to approve the establishment of a provisional government with the French, two significant events occurred. One was the arrival on November 24 of some supplies belonging to the Canadian Government. They were consigned to Dr. Schultz, and were put in his store. But it was at once apparent that this shipment of "government pork" could be a means of supplying a force of Canadian sympathizers, just as the pemmican of Fort Garry was the means of keeping the *métis* in arms. Manoeuvring by Riel and Schultz began at once. Both claimed to be guarding the supplies on behalf of the Canadian government, Riel with patrols from the Fort, and Schultz by collecting a body of Canadians in his house. But each was concerned to prevent the other from controlling the provisions, Riel fearing that they would be used to supply a Canadian rising at Portage la Prairie or the Lower Fort, and Schultz fearing that Riel would prevent him from disposing of them according to whatever plan the Canadians might adopt. The "government pork" was for the next few days the likely cause of a clash between Canadians and *métis*.

The second occurrence was the intervention of Schultz in the debates on the formation of a provisional government. The

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Cowan Diaries, November 23, 1869.

leader of the Canadian party had as yet taken no conspicuous part in the events of the Resistance. Yet its success would defeat his nearly realized ambition of being the first beneficiary, as the advocate of the Canadian cause in the North-West, of the establishment of Canadian rule. Riel's programme of inducing the Settlement to unite to negotiate terms of union would mean delay, and almost certainly that the union would be carried out by others than the friends of Schultz. The policy of union and negotiation must therefore be challenged, and in fact it was easy to do so. Any dissent, any demonstration against the policy of Riel might be held up as evidence that no union existed, that Riel and his proposed government did not represent the Settlement, that Canada should refuse negotiation, that the United States should refrain from intervention or recognition. Here was the pattern of the drama to be played out in the Resistance by the two protagonists, Riel and Schultz: the policy of union wrecked by intrigue and force, until the exasperated Riel was driven to impose unity by force.

The play began very quietly. A public meeting was called in the Engine House on the evening of November 26 to discuss the instructions to be given the representatives of Winnipeg for the adjourned meeting of the Convention on December 1.<sup>1</sup> Neither Begg in his journal, nor J. J. Hargrave in his article in the *Montreal Herald* of December 27, explains how the meeting was called. A. G. B. Bannatyne was chairman. Everyone was there, householders of Winnipeg, American citizens, Canadian new arrivals, members of the French Council. The householders were there because they, if any one, could vote; the Americans because they wished to have the provisional government recognized for their own ends; the Canadians because Schultz had seen to it, determined to block, if they could, approval of the provisional government. Everyone was armed, and there were those who would have welcomed a row, and tense moments when one seemed only too likely. It was a frontier meeting of young men and rough men; the blond and powerful Schultz, resolute and wary; the watchful Riel, practising a studied moderation; the subtle and

<sup>1</sup> Begg's *Journal*, November 26, and *Montreal Herald*, December 27, 1869.



silent O'Donoghue; the excitable Begg; and the gentlemanly Hargrave, sitting unarmed and unaware that others were armed.

It was a rehearsal of the Resistance, for most of the *dramatis personæ* were present, and the issue of the evening was the issue of the Resistance: would the Settlement unite behind Riel to demand terms from Canada? It was the purpose of Bannatyne and Begg to bring this about, if some show of legality could be made and negotiation with Canada assured. It was the purpose of the Americans too, in that any kind of provisional government that could profess to speak for the Settlement might bring about American intervention. It was the purpose of Schultz to demonstrate that the Settlement was not united.

The meeting was long and disorderly, punctuated by a speech of bombastic loyalty from one Michael Power and an admonitory recital by one Macpherson of the fall of another provisional government, that of Manitoba, which had been formed at Portage la Prairie by Thomas Spence in 1868. The discussion finally came to centre on the question of who had the right to participate in the meeting. No attempt was made to have participation based on nationality. Residence was the qualification debated; and Schultz tried to have a week's residence accepted, to allow the Canadian newcomers to vote, but he was defeated. The meeting finally broke up in some heat with nothing decided. On the next day, November 27, Bannatyne called a meeting of householders to decide the question of who might vote. Schultz tried this time to have three weeks' residence accepted, but seven months' residence was established. The effect of this was to exclude all the Canadian newcomers of the past summer. The old residents and the Americans had combined to defeat the Canadians and their sympathizers. If Riel's programme was to be upset, and the disunity of the Settlement demonstrated, it would have to be done outside Winnipeg and by other than political means. The Canadians continued to gather at Schultz's house to guard the government pork.

It is possible that few if any of the parishes would have sent their delegates back, if a compromise scheme, to which Riel

adhered from November 27 to November 30, had not been prepared in the Bannatyne and Begg circle, which was openly sympathetic with the determination of the *métis* to obtain terms from Canada. The scheme was that the Council of Assiniboia should continue as the legislature of the Colony, while the people elected an Executive Council to negotiate with Canada.<sup>1</sup> The proposal seemed to avoid few of the difficulties a provisional government would have raised, but it did satisfy the doubters in the English parishes, and some at least of the delegates returned to meet the French on December 1.

Before the Convention began its session, however, both English and French were confronted with "The Queen's Proclamation". It was not unexpected, for it was now generally known that at some early date, probably the first of December, the transfer would take place in London, the régime of the Hudson's Bay Company would end, and the authority of Canada in the North-West would begin.<sup>2</sup> The paralysis of Governor Mactavish's administration was partly caused by this anticipated but uncertain demise, as well as by the Governor's grave illness and his proneness to despair. Riel himself was seeking to discover an interregnum, a hiatus of authority, which would justify the establishment of a provisional government. And he had in fact satisfied himself that, whatever might occur in London, the decrepitude and incapacity of the government of Assiniboia, and the enforced absence of the governor-designate from the Territory, would in fact bring about just such a lapse of government.

McDougall also had become increasingly concerned with the possibility of such a lapse, and was fully aware of the advantage it would be to Riel. The date of the transfer to Canada, after some changes, had been fixed at December 1.<sup>3</sup> When McDougall had left Ottawa, he had been informed that the transfer would take place on that date. Since his departure,

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal* below, November 27, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, November 30, 1869. Mactavish reported that the Convention had been adjourned on November 23 to December 1, because he thought that the Royal Proclamation would be issued in Red River on that date, and the Governor and Council of Assiniboia superseded by a new régime. Mactavish also understood that McDougall planned to come in with the Proclamation.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, Macdonald to Tupper, August 17, 1869.

McDougall had received no word of any change, and was therefore bound to assume that the transfer would occur on December 1. The Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company had actually signed the deed of surrender on November 19. On Canada paying the £300,000, the territory would, within the month and presumably on December 1, have been transferred to Canadian jurisdiction. Until a Canadian Governor formally assumed the government, however, Governor Mactavish and other magistrates would remain in office until replaced. But McDougall assumed, though in this he was mistaken, that the government of the Hudson's Bay Company would at once expire, and would immediately be succeeded by the Canadian government that he had been commissioned to inaugurate. Would the absence of any proclamation or inauguration of a new government mean, or at least be a pretext for assuming, that no government existed? McDougall concluded, particularly in view of Riel's seizure of the public moneys on November 23, that it would, and that, in the absence of further instructions, he was in duty bound to do what he could to prevent such a situation developing.<sup>1</sup>

McDougall's reasoning on his premises was clear and his sense of duty commendable. But what, in fact, could he do? He could do nothing but make an enormous gamble that the transfer *and the union with Canada* would take place on December 1.

With his secretary, J. A. N. Provencher, he prepared two proclamations. The first, purporting to be a Royal Proclamation, declared that the transfer had taken place and that McDougall had become Governor; the second, above his

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12). See also McDougall's defence in P.A.C., William McDougall, *The Red River Rebellion* (Toronto, 1870), p. 24. On his assumptions, it is difficult to see how McDougall could have refrained from some action. Howe, however, in his despatch of December 24, 1869, castigating McDougall for issuing his Proclamation, pointed out that the assumption was wrong; the surrender of the Territory by the Company to the Crown would within a month be *followed* by a Proclamation fixing the date of union of the North-West with Canada; *ibid.*, Howe to McDougall, December 24, 1869. That is, the assumption that on December 1 the Government of Assiniboia would end and that of Canada begin, so generally held, was not necessarily valid, and could not be acted on without confirmation by Proclamation.



own signature as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Territories, announced his entrance on that office and required all public officers except Mactavish to continue to discharge their duties.<sup>1</sup> Both documents were taken across the boundary on the dark winter night of November 30–December 1 and read aloud to the windy plains. Copies had been taken to the Settlement by Colonel Dennis, and it was these copies of “The Queen’s Proclamation” which had been put before the Convention on the morning of December 1. McDougall had thus done what he could to ensure the continuation of government in the North-West.

In fact, both proclamations were completely void. The Canadian Prime Minister, Sir John Macdonald, had taken a great part in the preparations for the assumption of the government of the North-West; indeed, the main direction was his. When the news of the stopping of McDougall at the border reached him on November 22, he had at once seized on the possible consequences of the act, and on November 26 he cabled the Canadian agent in London, Sir John Rose, not to pay over the £300,000 on December 1.<sup>2</sup> Thus the Canadian government refused to accept the transfer, claiming that it was entitled to quiet possession and was not obliged to accept the territory while disturbed conditions continued in Red River. Macdonald was also to argue that surrender of the government by the Company would give the “rebels” some standing “as a government of necessity”.<sup>3</sup> The stopping of the transfer and of the union with Canada was a shrewd, if somewhat exacting, move. Its effect upon events in Red River, though it was unknown at the time, was considerable. No lapse of government occurred, and the Hudson’s Bay Company remained the legal authority in Rupert’s Land and the North-West. Thus the subtle calculations of Riel and the rash bluff of McDougall were both deprived of meaning. Riel was incontestably in rebellion, and McDougall had blundered incredibly.

All this was unknown in Red River, however, and the series

<sup>1</sup> Both proclamations are printed in C.S.P., 1870 (12).

<sup>2</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 101, Macdonald to Sir John Rose, November 26, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Macdonald to Rose, November 30, 1869.

of events precipitated by McDougall's dramatic entrance on the stage of the Resistance, pursued a brief and violent course. In the Convention, McDougall's claim to be governor did not in the least deflect Riel from his determination to establish a provisional government to treat for terms of union. It merely made him prepared to open negotiations with McDougall at Pembina, provided McDougall could prove he had authority to negotiate. The English delegates, for their part, wished to learn what the French proposed to submit for negotiation. At the request of the French, the Convention adjourned for two hours, and in this time the first "List of Rights" was drawn up. When this hasty sketch of the rights demanded by the *métis*, with its manifest American inspiration,<sup>1</sup> was read to the English, they in general agreed that the things sought were not unreasonable. The Convention broke up, however, because Riel suggested that an Act of the Canadian Parliament would be required to make any agreement, and because he insisted that delegates be sent to negotiate with McDougall, whom he passionately refused to allow to come into the territory.<sup>2</sup> Thus the final difference between the French and English was not over the desirability of seeking some guarantees of favourable treatment by Canada, or over the general character of what was desired, but over the admission or exclusion of the man who at that point was believed to be the Queen's representative. The English would not aid or abet the Resistance; the *métis* would not admit McDougall because that would have led to a contest with the Canadian party. The Convention now dissolved; and Riel, dismissing

<sup>1</sup> As early as November 1, "Spectator" had written the *Daily Press* of St. Paul, saying the *métis* would demand: (1) the right to elect their own legislature; (2) the legislature to have the right to pass all laws of a local nature by a two-thirds vote over veto of the Executive; (3) a free homestead and pre-emption law; (4) a portion of the public lands for schools, roads and bridges; and (5) treaties with the Indians; *Daily Press*, November 14, 1869. J. W. Taylor reported these prospective demands to Hamilton Fish on November 16; M.H.S., Taylor Papers, 1869-70 D., Taylor to Fish, November 16. All appeared in the "List of Rights". Whether prepared by the annexationists of Pembina, or merely an intelligent appreciation, by the same people, of what the *métis* would demand, it does seem that this American list served, and was meant to serve, as a model. What is apparent is that the "List of Rights" of December was hastily drawn up by an unprepared Riel and Council.

<sup>2</sup> *Notebook of James Ross*, No. x below.

the English contemptuously, went on to pursue the course he had planned, but with the support of the *métis* only.

His following amongst his own people was immediately increased by a further act of McDougall's. The Canadians in Winnipeg were already guarding the government provisions deposited in Schultz's store,<sup>1</sup> and others elsewhere were in touch with sympathizers amongst the English. McDougall, in sending Dennis back to the Settlement, had furnished him with a commission as his deputy and conservator of the peace, with wide powers to raise a force and put down those in arms against constituted authority.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the commission was to make legal any action taken to expel the French from Fort Garry, if Dennis found that there was popular support amongst the English for such an undertaking.<sup>3</sup> It is possible, however, that McDougall's real purpose was somewhat more extensive and at the same time less belligerent. He was, in the first place, convinced that the action of the half-breeds must not go unchallenged, lest their acts appear to have general approval, and American intervention be invited. Seen in this light, the purpose of Dennis's mission was rather to make a counter-demonstration than to wage war. In the second place, McDougall was concerned not merely with the existing situation, but with that which would develop when summer opened the waterways from Canada. Over these, he assumed, a military expedition would make its way to Red River. The *métis* at Fort Garry were well placed to resist a force coming from the south. It was, however, highly improbable that the American Government would allow a military expedition to cross its territory. The expedition, then, would have to come in either by Hudson Bay, or by Thunder Bay and the Winnipeg river. Both routes would bring the force up the Red to the

<sup>1</sup> These were provisions for the Snow and Dennis parties. They became a matter of concern to D. A. Grant, Dennis's bookkeeper, on November 24, because he feared the *métis* intended to seize them. C.S.P., 1870 (12). A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, November 30, 1869. Riel in turn came to fear that the Canadian party planned to use them to support a rising against his régime.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12). See copy in Begg's *Journal*, December 7, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), McDougall to Howe, November 29, 1869, in which he refers to the measures he has taken to organize a force "to seize Riel and his colleagues, and disperse the rank and file of his followers".



English parishes and Lower Fort Garry. It would be a convenience to have that fort in friendly hands as a counter to Upper Fort Garry. Similarly, it would be an advantage and perhaps a necessity to have the Indians of the Lake of the Woods and Rainy River region prepared for the passage of the troops. Thus at the same time that Dennis was despatched to the Settlement, Joseph Monkman, a half-breed guide and client of Schultz, was despatched with instructions to treat with the tribes to the east of Red River.<sup>1</sup> These instructions were of such a nature that Howe and Macdonald, on seeing them later, were alarmed, presumably by the consideration that they would be misrepresented as an attempt to raise the tribes of the region.<sup>2</sup> But, seen as a whole, McDougall's plan appears to have been one of counter-demonstration and preparation for the summer of 1870.

No one reading Dennis's commission, however, would have come to such a conclusion, and on its publication,<sup>3</sup> Riel's instant assumption was that war against the *métis* was intended. It was no doubt the activities of the Canadians which caused him to refuse to enter into the Bannatyne-Begg compromise scheme after having promised to do so. It was as a precaution directed against the Canadians that he determined on December 2 to close the offices of the *Nor' Wester* and the *Red River Pioneer*. Now the war-like moves of McDougall and Dennis hardened his determination. Force would be met with force. From the first days of December, the Provisional Government assumed an increasingly "military" character, and some observers described the régime as one of "martial

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, McDougall to Macdonald, December 15, 1869; Monkman to McDougall, March 25, 1870; Macdonald to Monkman, March 29, 1870; Secretary of State for Provinces, 1870, 88, McDougall to Howe, January 14, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), Howe to McDougall, February 8, 1870, in which he acknowledges receipt of a copy of the instructions to Monkman and other papers; the instruction, to Monkman were not printed with the other material. They are in P.A.C., Secretary of State for Provinces, 1870, 88, Dennis to Monkman, December 16, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> McDougall asserted that it was never intended to be published and was merely meant to give Dennis legal protection: P.A.C., William McDougall, *The Red River Rebellion*, pp. 32-33.

law".<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the young leader could now act with confidence, for the threat of English attack brought the French swarming in to Riel's support. An outbreak would have divided the Settlement clearly along national lines.

Colonel Dennis, meantime, having secretly left copies of the Proclamation at Fort Garry and Winnipeg, continued down the Red to Lower Fort Garry. There on a hand press he published his commission, called on all loyal men to join him in suppressing the disturbances, and proceeded, with the help of Major Hart, to enrol volunteers. The most eager were the strongly loyalist Indians of St. Peter's. The English settlers responded slowly and in small numbers.<sup>2</sup> The enrolment of the Swampies lent colour to the charges, soon to appear in the St. Paul press, that McDougall and Dennis were prepared to employ Indians to put down the *métis*. The fact that the St. Peter's Indians were, through the influence of their Church of England missionaries, Christian, civilized and devoted to the Queen, was unknown to the eager publicists of Pembina.

The charges from Pembina suddenly became a shriek of protest against the use of Indians by the Canadians. It was claimed that the refugee Sioux on the Assiniboine and Souris, as well as Prince's Indians, were being raised against the *métis*. This time the propaganda from Pembina had a note of sincerity; the writers were actually frightened. What were the facts? McDougall had been in touch at Pembina with the chiefs of the bands of the Red River region, but only to discuss their relations with the Canadian government.<sup>3</sup> Dennis had enrolled a number of Prince's Indians; but was ordered by

<sup>1</sup> There was no formal proclamation of martial law, and it would have had no legal validity had there been. But there were numerous unofficial statements, mostly American, that martial law existed. Riel acted frequently on this assumption. U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, January 6, 1870, No. 21: "Ever since the occupation of Fort Garry the people have been living under martial law but it has never been expressly proclaimed." J. W. Taylor described Riel as being "Secretary and Marshall" and as having "proclaimed and enforced martial law"; U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, January 20, 1870. And Beggs notes the re-establishment of civil law on May 9, 1870, when the Provisional Government was at last completed by the adhesion of the English parishes.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), Dennis to Schultz, December 4, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66, McDougall to Howe, November 29, 1869.

McDougall to use them only to garrison Lower Fort Garry.<sup>1</sup> And McDougall, as noted above, later sent an emissary to the Indians of the Lake of the Woods region. There his dealings with them ended, and he was later solemnly to deny that he authorized the use of Indian allies. But the people at Pembina had reason to believe that members of the Canadian party had been in touch with the Indians.<sup>2</sup> The full truth will probably never be known. It is, however, of interest to note that the name of "Shawman" was frequently mentioned in connection with the Sioux, who had been refugees on British territory since 1863. "Shawman" was the notorious George Racette, drunkard, bad man, plains trader, and confederate of Dr. Schultz.<sup>3</sup> Schultz's influence with the Sioux and the Indians of St. Peter's, and also with the tribes of the Lake of the Woods region, was considerable. These Indians and the *métis* were not friendly, but rivals over the land question, and the Sioux, of course, were enemies to the Americans. Schultz may have used Racette to make contact with the Sioux, or Racette may have anticipated his supposed wishes. Nothing can be proved, yet it seems clear that very nasty possibilities came only too near to realization. No such Indian menace developed, however, and Canadians and *métis* were left to fight their own battles.

The probability is, in such a conflict, that Riel, whose policy required peace and union, not war, in the Settlement, would not have precipitated matters. He would have left Dennis with a garrison of Indians, Canadians and sympathizers at the Stone Fort twenty miles away, had it not been for the party of Canadians around Schultz still guarding the government pork in Winnipeg within cannon shot of Fort Garry. The position of Schultz's party was in fact tactically indefensible, and on December 4 Dennis sent an order by Captain C. A. Boulton

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 92, McDougall to Dennis, December 8, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Winnipeg, I, N. E. Nelson to Malmros, December 19, 1869. Nelson was Deputy-Collector of Customs at Pembina. He reported that through "a masonic source", later stated to be Major J. W. Wallace of McDougall's party, McDougall's adherents at Portage la Prairie had been inciting the Sioux refugees to raid Pembina. He also notes McDougall's contacts with Red River Indians.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1, p. 198, to Begg's *Journal* below; also the *Globe*, January 31, 1870, quoting the *Montreal Herald*, a letter from Red River of December 25, 1869.



for his party to withdraw down the river.<sup>1</sup> With the recklessness that seemed to mark the Canadians throughout these events, the order, though repeated on December 6, was not obeyed. Had it been, the Settlement might have remained in a state of armed deadlock for the winter. But on December 7, Riel, forced by the impatience of his men with the dreary duty of patrolling the wintry street of the little village on the shelterless plain,<sup>2</sup> marched out a force with two cannon, surrounded Schultz's house, and compelled the surrender of its garrison. Forty-eight men, with Mrs. Schultz, Mrs. J. H. O'Donnell, and Mrs. Charles Mair, became prisoners of the *métis*, the ladies on their own insistence. This easy victory of the despised *métis*, followed by a lengthy detention of the prisoners, now put a cause of dissension between the *métis* and not only the Canadians but the English, which was not easily removed, and was to result in fatal consequences.

The capture of the Schultz party seemed to be a prelude to hostilities, and those in the Settlement who thought that time would bring the troubles to a satisfactory outcome if only the peace were kept, now increased their efforts to prevent the English from joining Dennis. The leaders amongst the peace-makers were the Protestant clergy, led by Bishop Robert Machray of the Church of England, and the Reverend John Black of the Presbyterian church in Kildonan. Machray, with James Ross, addressed himself directly to Dennis, urging him to cease his efforts to raise a force.<sup>3</sup> Dennis, discouraged by the slight success of his recruiting, the capture of the Schultz party, and the intervention of the clergy, issued a second proclamation on December 9, ordering those who had joined him, or were about to, to return home or remain there.<sup>4</sup> The statement in the proclamation that the publication of the French "List of Rights" had adversely affected the response to his call, by leading many of the English to believe that the French demands were not unreasonable, indicates an additional cause

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), Dennis to Schultz, December 4, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> See Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.

<sup>3</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), James Ross to Dennis, December 6, 1869 ; Bishop Machray to Dennis, December 6, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* See Begg's *Journal*, December 9, 1869.

of the sudden and ignominious collapse of McDougall's counter-demonstration. Dennis himself left the Stone Fort to travel towards Portage to persuade the approaching Sioux—perhaps tampered with by Racette, perhaps merely begging—not to go down to the Settlement. He then made his way to Pembina. There McDougall had remained, hoping for the arrival of a delegation from Riel. When none came, he wrote on December 13 to suggest a meeting.<sup>1</sup> His letter was ignored, and on December 18 the unfortunate man set out with his party across the plains to return to Canada.

## VII

At Fort Garry Riel was consolidating his position, as the Resistance prepared to enter its fourth phase, that of attempted negotiation with Canada. The capture of the Schultz party was followed by the issuing on December 8 of the proclamation of the Provisional Government.<sup>2</sup> On December 10, a flag with the *fleur de lys* and shamrock on the fly was hoisted over Fort Garry,<sup>3</sup> and the establishment of the Provisional Government celebrated. The Declaration of December 8, then and later often referred to as the declaration of independence of the *métis*, presumably from similarity in phraseology with the American Declaration, is in fact the reasoned statement of their grounds for proclaiming a provisional government. The government of the Hudson's Bay Company, it was argued, was an adjunct of the fur-trade inadequate for the needs of the people of the North-West, and had become ineffective. That government, moreover, by transferring the people of the North-West to a strange authority without their consent had violated the rights of man, as had Canada by accepting the transfer. The people of the North-West, abandoned by the only government they had known, were therefore justified by the law of nations in proclaiming a provisional government of their own. That

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), McDougall to Riel, December 13, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, December 8, 1869; also see No. XIII below.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, December 10, 1869, and Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below. On various descriptions of the flag, see note 2, p. 225, to Begg's *Journal*.

government, however, was prepared to treat with Canada for terms of union.

Such was the tenor of the original draft in French in the Archives of the Archbishopric of St. Boniface.<sup>1</sup> That there was any direct American influence may be denied. The argument and the idiom of the document are Riel's, though the composition was that of Dugas. It is to be noted that the Provisional Government is dated from November 24, the date of the French decision to proclaim the government, not from December 1. That is to say, Riel deliberately based his régime on the alleged forfeiture of the government of the North-West by the Hudson's Bay Company. It had abandoned and betrayed the people; and it was this, in the last analysis, not the supposed fact of the transfer in London on December 1, that Riel had chosen as the ground on which to rear the Provisional Government. Noteworthy also is the lack of any allusion to the Queen or the Crown, either in profession of loyalty or repudiation of allegiance. Presumably the omission was deliberate, but it was a departure from the *Protestation* of October 6, and undoubtedly lent colour to the belief that the *métis* were declaring their independence. The document as a whole, however, is no more than an assertion of the right of the *métis* to negotiate the terms on which Canadian authority would be established in the North-West. But the armed insurrection of the *métis* themselves, the opposition of the "loyalists", and the loud publicity emanating from Pembina made it difficult to see the fundamentals of the situation. These were that Riel had won the support of the majority of his "nation", of which he was now considered chief, for the programme he and his friends had worked out. That was a programme of resistance to annexation by Canada until the people of the North-West had been consulted and terms agreed upon. It was the special intention of Riel and his friends that the terms should be such as to enable the *métis* nation to maintain its being and identity. The co-operation of the English had been invited and hoped for; when it was not forthcoming, the young leader, with extraordinary resolution,

<sup>1</sup> See No. XII below.



had carried his people forward alone and had put himself in a position where he could ignore the approaches of McDougall and await those of the Canadian government itself. In attaining this position, however, he had taken the lead in illegal acts and risked the penalties of rebellion.

What, it may be asked at this point, was the political situation in the North-West? Sovereignty, of course, resided in the British Crown, undiminished and unaffected by the barrier at St. Norbert and the occupation of Fort Garry. The Imperial Government recognized only one government in the North-West, that of the Hudson's Bay Company, which remained the government *de jure* after December 1 as before, since the transfer had not taken place nor the union with Canada been proclaimed. That it was an incompetent government did not, under British law, establish a right in the people of Red River to set up a provisional government. No such government could possess any legal standing on British territory, as the Colonial Secretary had already pointed out to President Thomas Spence of the Council of Manitoba in 1868.<sup>1</sup> Nor, as the law officers of the Crown in London were to hold in January, 1870, did a provisional government possess any claim to recognition, as Sir John Macdonald feared, as a government *de facto*.<sup>2</sup> The Provisional Government was in fact illegal, and any acts of its officers were illegal. Legally speaking, Riel and his *métis* were in rebellion against the properly constituted authorities of the North-West, the Governor of the Northern Department of Rupert's Land and the Governor and Council of Assiniboia. The right of petition, for example, had not even been exercised, much less

<sup>1</sup> E. H. Oliver, *The Canadian North-West* (Ottawa, 1914), II, pp. 877-878.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 101, Granville to Young, January 7, 1870. So at least I interpret Granville's sentence: "I have been advised the apprehensions of the Canadian government are unfounded, and the status of the insurgents, or rioters (by which term they may be properly designated) will not be improved or strengthened by the transference of the Territory from the Hudson's Bay Company to Canada." See also the summing up of Chief Justice E. B. Wood of Manitoba in the *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine for the Murder of Thomas Scott* (Winnipeg, 1874), p. 116, and Lord Dufferin's despatch in which, like Wood, he points out that in all British jurisdictions, political authority derives from the Crown, not from the people.

exhausted, before the Resistance was begun. From this conclusion, in strict legal reasoning, there can be no escape.<sup>1</sup>

If legal reasoning leads to this conclusion, however, political reasoning does not. The fulfilment of rebellion consists in the throwing off of allegiance, not merely by implication in disobeying the laws and officers of the sovereign, but by explicit repudiation. This Riel and the *métis* neither did nor intended. Their prime purposes were to keep out McDougall and to force Canada to negotiate. This they might have done without interfering with the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, as in fact they did down to November 24. At that point Riel became convinced that the Company's government, if indeed it still existed in law, had forfeited all claim to obedience by its abandonment of its subjects and by its manifest incompetence. On these grounds, of much moral and practical validity, if legally untenable, he proclaimed the Provisional Government.

This government, which will be referred to here as the First Provisional Government, was to last until February 14. It was, however, until the end of December, a government proclaimed rather than a government established.<sup>2</sup> That of Assiniboia, it is true, had ceased to function. Everyone, including Governor Mactavish, had accepted McDougall's proclamation as authentic, and assumed that it had brought the government of Assiniboia to an end. When the truth became known, it was impossible to restore the old government and laws in the face of the Provisional Government. Yet Riel did not attempt to have the latter assume all the functions of government. It did not, for one thing, claim recognition by the English portion of the Settlement, but only their neutrality. Riel and his Council acted to keep the peace on two or three

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., G. 21, 22, Dufferin to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, December 10, 1875: "In the first place, as has been very clearly laid down by the Chief Justice of Manitoba, in his charge to the jury in the *Lépine* trial, it is not possible for any lawful executive authority to spring into existence within Her Majesty's Dominions unless it emanate from Herself." Dufferin warns that not too much is to be made of this legality.

<sup>2</sup> The American Consul, however, reported that it was performing the functions of government very satisfactorily: U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, December 11, 1869, No. 17.

occasions, but when a homicide occurred, the perpetrator was unapprehended and unpunished.<sup>1</sup> The records and funds of Assiniboia were retained; but no effort was made to collect arrears of the only tax imposed in Assiniboia, the four per cent customs duty. Thus, while the old civil government had collapsed, the new did not fully take its place.

Another reason for its limited character was that the Provisional Government was doing what its predecessor had not; it was maintaining a military force. To do this, particularly if negotiations with Canada should be protracted, it needed more funds than those seized on November 23. Thus it was that Riel on December 17 approached Mactavish with a demand for a loan of £1000 from the Hudson's Bay Company. Mactavish refused this, and later, more urgent demands. Riel and O'Donoghue then seized the cash box of the Company on December 22. Bruce had already paid the *métis* on duty their wages in goods from the Company's store, payment being promised to the Company.<sup>2</sup> As the Resistance could not be kept up without money, the alternatives to the seizure were to give up, or to accept offers of monetary assistance made by Americans.

Assured of means to carry on for some time, Riel now turned to the re-organization of his government. This was done on December 27. Bruce had been ill in mid-December, and this was the reason, or the excuse, for his resignation from the Presidency.<sup>3</sup> His place was taken by Riel. At the same time a Military Council was set up beside the Civil Council. The latter was the earlier National Committee, or Council, the former a new body which recognized that in fact the Provisional Government rested on the military force of the *métis*. Of this body Riel was head also as commandant in chief,<sup>4</sup> and thus combined in his own person both the civil and the military power. The young chief, by now thoroughly in command of his following,

<sup>1</sup> The shooting of one Johnson by, it was alleged, Ryder Larsen; P.A.M., *New Nation*, January 7, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See No. XIV below.

<sup>3</sup> Bruce's illness seems to have been a pretext; see his activity on December 21 in No. XIV below, and his evidence in *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine*, p. 62.

<sup>4</sup> P.A.C., Tupper Papers, Riel to de Salaberry, December 27, 1869.



proceeded with the organization of his executive. Louis Schmidt was made Secretary, W. B. O'Donoghue Treasurer, Ambroise Lépine Adjutant-General. American attempts to enter the government were later rebuffed, and Riel sought and gained the consent of A. G. B. Bannatyne to be Post Master, on the condition that union with Canada was to be sought.

The re-organized government was, however, primarily a military one. An ordinance naming the officers of the government and embodying certain provisions for the maintenance of order was drafted and issued, but was withdrawn for reasons which do not appear.<sup>1</sup> It was the Military Council which was active, and the authority it exercised came to be regarded as "martial law", though there was no formal proclamation of it and, of course, no legal basis for it. This condition of affairs was to last until May, 1870, and a grasp of this limited and military character of the First Provisional Government is necessary to an understanding of events up to that date.

As soon as Sir John Macdonald realized that he had a grave situation in Red River to deal with, he set about gathering information with respect to both Red River and the route there by way of Thunder Bay. One of his informants was Simon J. Dawson, another James Ermatinger.<sup>2</sup> His letters soon begin to reveal a concrete knowledge which is not evident in his correspondence on the North-West in the summer of 1869. And he at once realized the need of conciliating the *métis*, and the eminence of Riel. But his prompt conclusion that a job for Riel, perhaps in the police force Captain Cameron was to organize, would satisfy him and do much to weaken the Resistance, is an instance of his readiness to under-estimate the *métis*.<sup>3</sup> The appointments of *métis* to office was indeed one

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, January 8, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to McDougall, November 23, 1869; Macdonald to Rose, November 26, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Macdonald to McDougall, November 20, 1869: "This man Riel who appears to be the moving spirit is a clever fellow and you should endeavour to retain him as an officer in your future police." This proposal to make Riel one of the original officers of what was to be the Royal North-West Mounted Police casts some light on Macdonald's political approach and his eternal optimism.

object of the Resistance, but it was political office as leaders of their people that Riel and his colleagues desired.

Soon two courses of action were in preparation by Macdonald and Howe. One was to make ready for a military expedition by Thunder Bay in the summer of 1870 by beginning to build boats for the transportation of an expedition on the waterways west from Fort William.<sup>1</sup> The other was to send commissioners to reassure the *métis* as to the intentions of Canada.<sup>2</sup> This was an attempt to do in December what it

<sup>1</sup> Apparently as suggested by S. J. Dawson; *ibid.*, Macdonald to McDougall, November 23, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, memorandum of conversation between Commissioners Thibault and de Salaberry with several members of the Canadian Government before the Commissioners left Canada. The memorandum is as follows:

"[1] The Insurgents complain that they have been sold by the Hudson Bay Co.

They have neither been bought nor sold. The Crown agreed to pay £300,000 to the H.B.Co. in order to reacquire the same right over the country as the Queen has over other parts of the Dominion. Canada was called upon to pay that money because the North West Territories were to form a part of the Dominion.

[2] That they were not consulted.

The people could not be consulted by Canada because until the North West joined the Dominion they were under another government. The H.B.C. even complained to the British Government because Canada sent \$20,000 to be expended in opening a road to the country when the people were starving.

[3] That the proposed Government is despotic.

A reference to the Act will show that it was only intended for the formation of a temporary government that it expires at the end of the next session of parliament and was the only way in which a government could be organized in the first instance. The law provided that the Governor should be appointed by the Queen's representative in the same way as in all the Provinces of the Dominion and that all laws and ordinances should be not only approved by the Privy Council but also submitted to parliament as soon as possible.

[4] That a Governor's Council was sent from Canada to rule them.

But three members of the Council were nominated from Canada out of a Council from 7 to 15 and all the other members were to be filled up from residents in the country enjoying the confidence of the people. It was intended to establish representative institutions and place the Territory in the same position as the other Provinces, at the earliest moment that it was prepared for the change and desired it.

[5] They believed that they can withstand the power of Canada and if they wish the aid of the United States they can obtain it by becoming a state in the Union.

The course of the United States in reference to Cuba shews that it would be hopeless to expect any aid from that Government even should the people wish to substitute

would have been wise to do in July; but it was now too late. Riel would not now be reassured; he would welcome only commissioners with power to treat. Macdonald was improvising, and trying to overtake a situation all news of which was at least two weeks old when it reached Ottawa. Two commissioners were appointed well before the news of McDougall's fiasco reached Ottawa, when reassurance seemed to be all that was called for. The two were despatched on December 4. One was the Very Reverend J. B. Thibault, Vicar-General of St. Boniface, a much revered missionary and a priest of particular influence among the *métis*. The other was Colonel Charles de Salaberry, son of the hero of Châteauguay, who had been a member of the Red and Assiniboine Exploring Expedition of 1857-1858, when he had become popular among the *métis*.<sup>1</sup> But neither possessed the decisive authority needed, nor was either empowered to treat. Macdonald as yet had no idea that events had come to that pass. His government was prepared, however, as a concession to the people of Assiniboia, to continue for two years their four per cent tariff, in place of

republican institutions for the authority of the Queen who rules over every part of the Dominion as much as over England.

The whole power of England as well as of Canada will be used to prevent one foot of the British possessions on this Continent being wrested from the Queen by any foreign power.

In Canada the tariff is 15 per cent. In the United States it averages nearly 60 per cent. Under confederation each province gets back from the Federal Government money enough to pay the governor, the legislature, the local government and a large amount for the local expenses of the Province.

In the United States the Federal Government contributes nothing to these expenses, which are all borne by direct taxation after they are admitted as states.

Under confederation each province has the control of the Public Lands and all monies arising from the sale of Crown Lands, mines, minerals, etc., etc. In the United States the Federal Government takes all the money obtained by the sale of public lands.

A minute of council has been passed by the Canadian Government declaring that during the next two years, the duties in the North West Territories shall not exceed those now imposed."

How this interesting memorandum reached its present location can only be conjectured. It follows Malmros's despatch to J. B. Davis, dated January 15, 1870, No. 23, which contains a report of the failure of Thibault and de Salaberry to carry out their mission.

<sup>1</sup> See notes 1 and 2, p. 239, Begg's *Journal* below.



the fifteen per cent average level of the Canadian tariff. In addition, Thibault and de Salaberry were furnished with categorical comments by the Canadian cabinet on the grievances of the *métis*, and with copies of a Proclamation signed by Sir John Young, the Governor-General, on December 6, which called on those in arms to disperse and cease their illegal proceedings.<sup>1</sup>

As further news of developments in Red River came in, Macdonald discussed them with Donald A. Smith, who was temporarily in charge of the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company in Canada, and he also talked with George Stephen of the Bank of Montreal. These conversations led Macdonald to think it desirable to attempt to revive and re-instate the authority of the Hudson's Bay Company, by endeavouring "to make arrangements for the dispersion of the Insurgents and the dissolution of their Committee".<sup>2</sup> After attempting to persuade Stephen to undertake this task, Macdonald decided that Smith should be made a Special Commissioner to proceed to Red River. This was done on December 10, and Smith was instructed officially to learn the causes of the dissatisfaction and to effect the peaceable transfer of the territory.<sup>3</sup> He was also commissioned privately by Macdonald to buy off the insurgents, or some of them, with money or jobs.<sup>4</sup> The third commissioner was thus on a very different footing from the first two, and his instructions, official and private, were an attempt to deal with the situation, not by simple persuasion, but by material inducements.<sup>5</sup> The design, necessarily sketchy and tentative for want of up-to-date information, was to bring

<sup>1</sup> See No. XI below.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Macdonald to Rose, December 5, 1869: "Mr. Smith, Hopkins *locum tenens*, will go as a sort of Commissioner and in his capacity as an officer of the Hudson's Bay Company he will be allowed access to Fort Garry and to Governor McTavish. He will take a letter appointing him Commissioner on behalf of the Canadian Gov't and endeavour to make arrangements for the dispersion of the Insurgents and the dissolution of their Committee."

<sup>3</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), Howe to D. A. Smith, December 10, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to Smith, December 12, 1869.

<sup>5</sup> It was reported, however, that de Salaberry tried to bribe Riel, but failed: U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, January 6, 1870, No. 23.

about the downfall of Riel and the Provisional Government by rallying support behind the legal government of the Hudson's Bay Company. It was a tortuous and difficult game to expect one man alone to play against the wary and entrenched Riel.

With the organization of his government completed by the end of December, Riel had reached his immediate goal, a position from which to negotiate with Canada, and he stood at the summit of his power in Red River. This position he had reached by plans of surprising scope and thoroughness, a fervid and persuasive oratory, and a daring resolution in action. His opponents told contemptuous stories of him: of how he sold his widowed mother's only cow to buy a suit of clothes he might wear as President; they resented his power and called him dictator. He was, however, far from being an ignoble figure—"ambitious, quick of perception, though not profound, of indomitable energy, daring, excessively suspicious of others and of a pleasing and rather dignified address," wrote Oscar Malmros, the American Consul; and Riel's dictatorial acts he considered were forced upon him by his failure to induce the English, as he had induced the French, to unite with him in resistance to Canada.

Riel had at this time several pressing problems. One was the forty-odd prisoners captured on December 6, as well as others arrested before and after that date. These had been held in custody to prevent their fomenting or joining another "loyalist" rising. Bad as the situation was for the prisoners, it was not an agreeable one for the Provisional Government either. Therefore by the end of the month it was decided to release such of the prisoners as would agree to leave the country, or at least not to oppose the Provisional Government. Many of them were accordingly heard by a committee, or "court martial", and those who satisfied their interrogators, or undertook to leave the country, were freed.<sup>1</sup> By early January a minor exodus of released prisoners from the Settlement began, and a serious impediment to the settlement of the troubles by a union of French and English began to diminish.

<sup>1</sup> *St. Paul Daily Press*, January 1, 1870, and January 15, 1870; U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, January 6, 1870, No. 21.

Another concern was with the press. The *Nor'Wester* and the *Red River Pioneer* were not allowed to begin publication again. A press was desirable, however, particularly one that would express the viewpoint of the Provisional Government. Riel did consider the purchase of one of the presses, but took no action, whether for want of money or of an editorial staff is not apparent. The *Nor'Wester* was, however, purchased by Henry M. Robinson, an American trader in Winnipeg and a journalist. Enos Stutsman was to have been a proprietor in the enterprise, but for reasons which are not apparent he failed to come in.<sup>1</sup> When, therefore, the Settlement once more had a newspaper, at the beginning of January, it was an annexationist organ which, though friendly to the Provisional Government, took it for granted that the destiny of the North-West was absorption into the American Union. Why Riel allowed the American annexationist party to capture the press in this way, or what connection there was between the government and the paper, is not clear. Its title, the *New Nation*, suggests that it was an organ of the *métis* and their government. But Robinson was proprietor at least in name, and there is no evidence of interference by Riel until February, and none of control. It would seem, however, that Riel, lacking the means to begin a newspaper of his own, tolerated the Americans because he had not the same reason for suppressing the *New Nation* that he had for putting down the *Nor'Wester*, namely, that it was a threat to his government. It may be, too, that he realized that the annexationist policy of the *New Nation* actually served his own policy of negotiation with Canada, by creating alarm there.

The question of American influence on the Resistance is an obscure and subtle subject. Riel himself was not anti-American in feeling, and seems to have had some admiration of American institutions. This probably was the general attitude of the *métis*. Many of them made freighting trips to St. Paul, and most had American relatives and friends at Pembina, St. Joseph's, and St. Paul. On the other hand, they had reservations with respect to union with the United States.

<sup>1</sup> The *New Nation* is often referred to as Riel's organ, but it was not so until April 2, 1870. The above account is based on Begg's *Journal*, December 27, 28, 1869, and of January 9, 1870; also March 19, 1870.



One cause of this was the failure of the Pembina Indian Treaty of 1851;<sup>1</sup> another was the refusal of the American Government to recognize half-breeds as a group intermediate between Indian and white; and perhaps the American school system was a third. But there was no hostility, and American influence upon the course of the Resistance had no deep-seated aversion to American institutions to overcome. Riel's statement to Donald A. Smith that he was for annexation "only if the people wished it", meant that he did not expect them to do so, but would not oppose them if they did.

American attempts to influence Riel and his councillors—the distorted news concocted in Pembina; the visits of Stutsman, Joseph Rolette, Jr., and Joseph Lemay to Fort Garry; the open hope of the Americans in Winnipeg for annexation; and finally, the frankly annexationist tone of the *New Nation*—were all obvious enough. It seems clear, however, that these factors did not inspire the Resistance or to any degree affect its course. The rising of the *métis* was spontaneous and autonomous, and the Americans simply attempted to use it for their own ends, either private ends like Stutsman's, or public ends, such as those of Oscar Malmros.<sup>2</sup> What these American activities did in fact produce was a readiness on the part of the Canadian Government to conciliate and finally to negotiate with the people of Red River. Riel presumably anticipated this result. He knew also that, if negotiations with Canada failed, then the alternative of annexation to the United States lay ready to hand. Riel, in short, could not quarrel with the Americans until he was sure of terms with Canada.

The same observations apply to a particular kind of American influence, Fenianism. There were no Fenians in Red River; there is no firm evidence that W. B. O'Donoghue was one. This young Irishman had joined the Resistance out of

<sup>1</sup> Georges Dugas, *Histoire de l'ouest canadien* (Montreal, 1906), pp. 102-103.

<sup>2</sup> The consular reports of Malmros suggest that his public attitude towards the Resistance was quite correct; it was by indirection that he encouraged the movement; his hopes that it would lead to the annexation of the North-West and the dissolution of Confederation were strong: U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmrosto Davis, September 11, 1869, No. 10; November 6, 1869, No. 14.

sympathy with the *métis* and their cause. The shamrock on the flag of the Provisional Government was no more than a Gallic courtesy to O'Donoghue and the other Irish Catholics of Red River. But Fenianism, like American annexation, was always a factor in the situation, in that its aid might be sought if negotiations with Canada did not go well—and like annexation it operated to strengthen Riel's bargaining position.

That there was, however, early in January a turn in the fortunes of the American annexationists, Begg's *Journal* makes clear. The reasons which explain it are largely a matter of conjecture. First may be cited the fact that the Americans, like Riel, genuinely respected the will of the people of Red River. They were prepared to anticipate it, but not to override it. If the popular wish was definitely for negotiation with Canada they would respect it. Secondly, there was less need of American aid after Riel had seized the cash box of the Hudson's Bay Company on December 22. Thirdly, there was the fact that the Pembina annexationists were interested in other objects as well as in annexation. The chief annexationist, Stutsman, valued the Resistance chiefly as a stimulus to the establishment of an American military post at Pembina, and the consequent rise in the price of his land-holdings. The French annexationists in Pembina were concerned with the fate of their people, and not all of them were convinced that the *métis* would be best served by annexation. Joseph Lemay definitely came down on the side of negotiation with Canada at this time.<sup>1</sup> Whether his decision was caused, or only confirmed, by his conversations with the Honourable Charles Tupper is not clear. Tupper did indeed make a considerable personal impression on those with whom he talked, such as Ritchot, Lemay, and the two nuns, Sister Mary Jane McDougall and Marguerite-Marie Riel.<sup>2</sup> He convinced the two men that the United States would not intervene, a fact

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Tupper Papers, 1867-1873, J. A. N. Provencher to Tupper, January 24, 1870; Lemay to Tupper, February 12, 1870; Hon. Charles Tupper, *Recollections of Sixty Years* (London, 1914), p. 116.

<sup>2</sup> These were members of the house of the Grey Nuns (Sisters of Charity) at St. Norbert. Sister Marguerite-Marie was Riel's sister Sara.

which Senator Alexander Ramsey was to confirm.<sup>1</sup> He formed a life-long friendship with Sister Riel, Louis Riel's favourite sister.<sup>2</sup>

All these points are somewhat conjectural, but their sum seems to indicate that December was the high tide of American influence on the Resistance. By mid-January the tide had definitely turned, although its ebb was not to be completed until the return of Bishop Taché in March. Such a definite turn in the first half of January would seem to indicate that the belief of Mactavish and Smith that Riel intended to bring about annexation was unfounded.

When Thibault, de Salaberry, and Smith, the three commissioners from Canada, arrived at Pembina, they learned that the Provisional Government was well established and Riel's authority unchallenged. Vicar-General Thibault went on to St. Boniface on December 24, and was at once confined to the Bishop's Palace by the suspicious Riel, who naturally feared an attempt to undermine his influence, as indeed Thibault's mission of conciliation would have done. Colonel de Salaberry was detained at Pembina, presumably for the same reason, until December 29, when he was admitted by a written order of Riel as commandant-in-chief. The official character of the third commissioner had not been made public, and Donald A. Smith, with his brother-in-law, Richard Hardisty, came in as a private citizen on December 25. He had cautiously left his commission and instructions at Pembina.

A curious interlude followed, during which the commissioners of conciliation were effectively insulated from the *métis* by Riel, and the character of Smith's mission, though not the fact that he held a commission, remained unknown. Thibault and de Salaberry seem not to have influenced the development of events; the former became very sympathetic with the Provisional Government; the latter was and remained

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115, A.A.S.B., Lemay to Taché, March 12, 1870: "Les Américains aimeraient beaucoup la Rivière Rouge, mais ils ne feront jamais guerre pour son acquisition. J'en ai l'assurance de Sénateur Ramway [sic]." (The Americans are much interested in Red River, but they will never go to war to obtain it. I have Senator Ramsey's assurance as to that.)

<sup>2</sup> Tupper, *Recollections*, p. 116.



a nullity.<sup>1</sup> The special commissioner was a bird of another feather. Smith had been allowed to enter Fort Garry, after close questioning by Riel, and after a verbal sparring over recognition of the Provisional Government;<sup>2</sup> and he was suffered to reside there, in communication with Mactavish and the other officers of the Company. Smith asked Riel if he would be allowed to speak as a commissioner, but got no reply. What he actually did was not clear then or now, but the general purpose of his activities was clearly to create an anti-Riel party amongst the English and *métis* by the use of the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company, and by bribes. There was plenty of material to work with; a good number of *métis* had never supported Riel, but, without joining William Dease in opposition, had remained aloof. Even some of Riel's councillors, particularly Charles Nolin of Oak Point, now feared that Riel was going too far in his opposition to Canada,<sup>3</sup> and began to think that the Canadian commissioners should be heard. Finally, there was the annual need of the tripmen for credit to carry their families through the winter. January was the time for engaging the brigade crews for the northern trips. Riel, with only the limited funds of the Council of Assiniboia and the Company's cash-box at his command, could pay only a limited number for garrison duty in Fort Garry. What Smith did, it seems reasonable to suppose, was to make direct approaches to leading men amongst the English and to certain of the *métis* through Hardisty, with the purpose of undermining Riel and restoring the government of the Company on a popular basis. This was the source, no doubt, of the movement Begg notes in his *Journal*.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The main reason for their lack of influence as commissioners was that they had no power to treat: P.A.C., Secretary of State for the Provinces, 1870, 1041, Louis Schmidt to Thibault, January 11, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Riel's sympathizers reported that Smith had recognized it; this Smith denied. The truth seems to be that he had to quibble to gain admission to Fort Garry, his immediate object.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, May 27, 1870, letter of Pierre Lèveillé, stating why he had supported Smith, and that he had been led to believe he had full powers and therefore should be heard, which Riel doubted. A.A.S.B., Lestanc to Taché, February 3 and 8, 1870, in which the Administrator states it as a supposition that the Company had won over those of the French disposed to oppose Riel, by entertainment and lavish promises. The result was the creation of two parties which all but came to blows.

<sup>4</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, January 13-16, 1870, below.

Thus Smith and Hardisty were able to acquire a following for their confederates under the guise of engaging tripmen,<sup>1</sup> and by these or similar means, a number of *métis* were detached sufficient to give Riel cause for alarm.

The period of quiet and intrigue ended on January 14, by which time Smith had won so much support that Riel decided he must be heard. He granted Smith permission to send Hardisty to Pembina for his commission, and sent two of his men to act as guides and no doubt also as guards. For Riel had resolved to see the documents before they were delivered to Smith, with a view to detaining them if it seemed desirable. The question in his mind is clear: was Smith empowered to negotiate, and particularly, was he empowered to negotiate with the Provisional Government? More and more Riel found himself forced to defend his creation, the Provisional Government, until it became an end in itself, a demonstration of the political capacity of his people. But Smith's party suspected Riel's purpose, and three of Smith's *métis*, Pierre Léveillé, John F. Grant, and Angus McKay set off to escort Hardisty back to the Settlement. Riel himself went out to meet Hardisty and his guards. They all met at a house south of St. Norbert. When they set out again for Fort Garry, a contest ensued in which Léveillé threatened to shoot Riel, and which resulted in Hardisty being escorted to the Fort in triumph with the papers on January 18.

Riel had lost the opening skirmish with Smith in humiliating fashion, but he was not yet defeated. Fierce discussions began at once in Fort Garry. The fort was now held as much by the supporters of Nolin and Léveillé as by those of Riel.<sup>2</sup> So great was the possibility of conflict that Lestanc, Thibault and de Salaberry hurried over as mediators.<sup>3</sup> What Smith and his supporters desired was a public meeting before which Smith could read his papers and make known the intentions of

<sup>1</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, January 15, 1870, No. 23. P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, D. A. Smith to Macdonald, January 4, 8, and 11, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, January 18, and Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, Smith to Macdonald, January 11, 1870. Thibault, at least, was critical of Smith at this juncture; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 103, Thibault to Langevin, January 8, 1870.

Canada. Finally Riel agreed, under pressure from Nolin and Léveillé, and on the advice of the mediators, to call a general meeting for the following day, January 19.<sup>1</sup> It was a compromise in that Riel, as head of the Provisional Government, summoned an assembly which he did not want and which he feared.<sup>2</sup>

## VIII

With this compromise, the Resistance entered its fifth phase, that of negotiation with the representatives of Canada. But things had not gone as Riel had planned. Another attempt was now made to unite the whole Settlement, but the initiative this time was not Riel's, but Smith's. Negotiations with Canada might now be expected; but they would be conducted on behalf of the whole North-West, not by Riel's Provisional Government, but by representatives of the people of the North-West acting for the legal government of Assiniboia re-inforced by popular support. It seemed that Smith had out-witted Riel and brought him to the verge of defeat. Moreover, he had done so by adopting Riel's own original policy of union and negotiation, as well as by dividing Riel's following among the *métis*.

Almost at once, however, a counter-movement set in. With the aid of Thibault and Lestanc, Riel succeeded in reassuring Nolin and Léveillé as to his attitude toward Canada. By the morning of January 19, the breach Smith had created in the French ranks was beginning to close.<sup>3</sup>

On January 19, at noon, a great crowd of upwards of a thousand people both French and English and from as far as St. Peter's, assembled within the walls of Fort Garry to hear Smith read and explain his commission and instructions.<sup>4</sup> They packed the southern half of the great enclosure and faced the gallery of the large mess building which was situated

<sup>1</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, January 22, 1870, No. 24.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12). Report of D. A. Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., *Le Métis*, April 18, 1874, "Response au Dr. Lynch".

<sup>4</sup> The mass meeting reported in the *New Nation*, January 21, and January 28, 1870. See also Begg's *Journal*, January 19 and 20, and Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.



mid-way between the south and north gates. On the gallery stood Smith, Riel, Thibault, de Salaberry, Bishop Machray, Father Ritchot, and other important people. Around the sides of the square stood the silent guards. It was a tense assembly. Many were armed, and there were indignant spirits in the crowd prepared to demand the release of the remaining prisoners, so that the guards were alert. The thermometer stood at twenty below during the long hours of the reading and the discussion.

The meeting elected Thomas Bunn chairman, Louis Riel interpreter, and Judge John Black secretary. Smith read his commission and instructions. He then asked for the return of certain papers addressed to Governor Mactavish and Bishop Machray, seized by Riel. After much protest Riel and O'Donoghue were forced by the meeting to produce them, but they were not read. Smith then said he wished to read a copy of the Governor-General's proclamation of December 6 which had been sent to Governor Mactavish.<sup>1</sup> This was not produced, and in its place he read the Colonial Secretary's cablegram of November 26, on which the proclamation was based. It said, in effect, that Canada was to follow a conciliatory policy and those who felt aggrieved might petition the Governor-General. With Canada's conciliatory spirit thus revealed to the people of Red River, Riel and O'Donoghue were defeated by a commissioner whose powers they had thought inadequate. But Riel still commanded superior force. When an excited English half-breed, John Burke, demanded that the prisoners be released, Riel refused. The meeting ended in subdued but intense excitement.

When the meeting was re-assembled at noon the following day, there was apparent some subtle change of atmosphere. It was again a large assembly. A dozen *métis* were appointed to police it. Judge Black refused to continue as secretary, and Bannatyne was elected in his place. The Reverend Henry Cochrane joined Riel as interpreter, to translate the proceedings into Cree. John Burke apologized for having demanded the release of the prisoners, saying his action had been instigated by another. Father Lestanc made a conciliatory

<sup>1</sup> See No. XI below.

address. And Riel, who the day before had struggled to keep himself before the meeting, this day was confident and to the fore. What had happened during the night is unrecorded, so it is not clear why Smith read, instead of the Proclamation itself, only a covering letter from the Governor-General to Mactavish.<sup>1</sup> Whether this significant omission was merely because the Proclamation was not available, or was an act of deliberate policy, cannot be said. Since a public reading of the proclamation would have made the continuation of the Provisional Government an act of positive and undoubted rebellion, it may have been that Smith forbore in order not to drive Riel to such an extreme. It must, indeed, be asked whether such an agreement had not been reached during the night, for it is unlikely that the copies of the Proclamation had been destroyed. In any event, Smith simply read and explained his and McDougall's instructions, in order to make it clear that Canada's intentions were just and its policy liberal. Certain it is that the French were once more united, thanks to Lestanc's mediation, at least against the English; although there were still differences between Riel and Nolin.

When Smith had finished, Riel moved, seconded by Bannatyne, that twenty delegates should be elected from the English parishes and twenty from the French, to consider what was to be done for the welfare of the country. On being challenged, Riel said that he accepted Smith's commission as sufficient, that is, as a basis for initiating negotiations with Canada. His motion was agreed to, and after conciliatory speeches had been made by Ritchot, Machray and Riel, the mass assembly ended.<sup>2</sup> By his participation in the calling of the meeting and his moving of the motion to elect a convention, Riel had put himself once more at the head of events in Red River. He had averted the overthrow of the Provisional Government, and, actually aided by Smith's manoeuvres, was on the way to the realization of his policy of union and

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Secretary of State for Provinces, 1876, 1043, Proofs of Smith's Report of April 12, 1870. Twenty-one lines are struck out, in which Smith wrote that on the night of January 19-20, Lestanc and Thibault won over a majority of Smith's French party to Riel.

<sup>2</sup> The Mass Meeting reported in the *New Nation*, January 21 and I (4), January 28, 1870. See also Begg's *Journal* January 19 and 20 and Schmidt's *Memoirs* below.

negotiation. Smith therefore was the real loser in the tense contest waged from January 14 to January 20, the more so that his fear that Riel aimed at annexation was groundless by mid-January.

On the morrow of the mass meeting, the nascent democracy of Red River had once more to elect representatives without the benefit of political experience or electoral laws. In the village of Winnipeg a piece of sharp political practice by the American party resulted in the election of Henry McKenney and one Alfred H. Scott, the latter, like McKenney, reputed to be an annexationist, though of British birth.<sup>1</sup> The Bannatyne-Begg group, which would have nominated and probably elected Bannatyne, was tricked out of its representative, a result which may have affected the composition of the delegation to be sent to Canada. The remainder of the English delegation was broadly representative of all but the extreme "loyalists", and included even an Upper Canadian, Kenneth McKenzie of Portage la Prairie. In the election of the French delegates, there was, it would seem, a strenuous contest between the Riel and Nolin groups. Seventeen of the twenty delegates were Riel's men, but the loss of three seats angered the President, shaken as his position was, and faced as he was with the possibility of twenty English votes against proposals he might make. The effects of the electoral struggle were to appear in the debates of the Convention.

The Convention of Forty met in the court house on January 26, and on the motion of Riel, Judge Black was elected chairman. Under his able and impartial chairmanship the Convention heard Donald A. Smith read his papers, and dealt with disputed elections in Winnipeg and St. Charles. The days from January 27 to February 3 were spent in discussing a "List of Rights" under nineteen headings. The debates were harmonious, and agreement readily reached. The only proposal defeated was one to the effect that the military force of the country should for four years be made up of natives. Riel was co-operative, and this first week of the Convention was marked by a relaxation of tension, which implied that

<sup>1</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*.



union with Canada was accepted and that it only remained to agree on terms of union.<sup>1</sup> So marked was this change that the Americans were less assured of annexation and the *New Nation* began to alter its tone.

The "List of Rights" was not such as to make union difficult. It asked that the Canadian tariffs should not apply for three years, until the completion of a railway, and for the speedy completion of steam communication with Canada. It also provided for the admission of the North-West as a territory, to be governed as much like a province as the status of territory permitted. There was little of significance in the remaining articles, apart from a request for the local control of the public lands of the old District of Assiniboia, which Canada could not be expected to grant. It seemed that Red River was about to surmount its troubles and might soon expect to join with Canada on terms drafted by its representatives.

When, however, it was proposed on February 3 in the Convention to call in the Canadian Commissioners, and lay the completed "List of Rights" before them, Riel demurred. In turn he presented successively to the Convention three propositions: on February 3 that the North-West should enter Confederation as a province, and not as a territory; on February 4, that the bargain with the Hudson's Bay Company should be annulled, and all negotiations respecting the transfer be conducted *ab initio* between Canada and the North-West; on February 8 and 9 that the Convention recognize and complete his Provisional Government.<sup>2</sup> The first two proposals the Convention rejected; the third Riel carried only by a display of temper and the threat of force.

Why he should have advanced these demands at this stage requires explanation, and none is readily evident. By advancing and urging them as he did, Riel risked the ruin of the work of the Convention. It cannot be ignored that it was at this time that the American Consul Malmros was informing his

<sup>1</sup> The Convention of Forty is reported in the *New Nation*, February 4, 11 and 18, 1870; see also Begg's *Journal*, January 26 to February 11, 1870, and Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, February 11 and February 18, 1870.

government that it was the plan of Riel and O'Donoghue to keep raising the demands of Red River until negotiation with Canada proved impossible and the way to annexation to the United States was open.<sup>1</sup> This is important evidence; it must, however, be held to be outweighed by contrary evidence with respect to Riel's attitude. The balance of evidence indicates that his purpose was union with Canada, on the best terms obtainable, it is true, but union, with American annexation an alternative only in the event of failure. It is probable that the same was not true of O'Donoghue, who may well have been the intermediary between Riel and the Americans, and whose views may have coloured Malmros's reports.

More likely is it that Riel was still trying to re-establish his leadership, so badly shaken by Smith's machinations and the independent course of the Nolins and other anti-Rielites. To do so he reverted to his original programme of discussing union only after a provisional government had established itself as the agent of both sections of Red River to conduct negotiations *de novo* with Canada. His three proposals fit into such an interpretation. Admission as a territory was in principle to accept the scheme of government laid down by the Act for the Temporary Government of the North-West under which McDougall had attempted to establish his government. Therefore Riel's proposal of February 3 for admission as a province, would vindicate the claim of the *métis* that the North-West was a viable, political community, competent to govern itself. For this reason, provincial status for the North-West had a particular appeal for Riel, and he had carefully studied the terms of the British North America Act with reference to the provinces.<sup>2</sup> His proposal of February 4 for repudiation of the bargain with the Hudson's Bay Company

<sup>1</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, February 14, 1870, No. 25, "... the proposal to join the Dominion provided she accepts the Bill of Rights is not made in good faith." A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, December 28, 1869, in which Mactavish reported that he did not think the leaders wished to make an arrangement with Canada.

<sup>2</sup> See *New Nation*, February 11, 1870; also P.A.M., Ross Papers, U, Riel to James Ross, February 21, 1870, asking him for his book on the Union. This may have been a copy of the B.N.A. Act, or of E. Whelan's *The Union of the Provinces* (Charlottetown, 1865).

was a necessary complement of his claim that by that bargain the Company had abandoned the people of the North-West and forfeited its right to govern them, the premise on which Riel's Provisional Government rested. His insistence of February 8 and 9 on his third proposition, is obviously to be explained only by such an interpretation, for it was not a raising of the terms to be asked of Canada, but simply a refusal to allow the people's convention to deal with Canada, instead of the Provisional Government. Riel was not playing for annexation, as the hopeful Americans thought, but attempting to out-manoeuvre Smith and defeat Smith's plan to revive the Government of Assiniboia, by demonstrating the complete powerlessness of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Indeed, it was the third proposition, that the Convention should recognize and complete the Provisional Government, that caused most controversy and all but wrecked the Convention. The Convention had refused first to approve Riel's proposition of February 3 for admission as a province; and his proposition of February 4, proposing the annulment of the bargain with the Hudson's Bay Company, was defeated by the votes of all the English delegates except Alfred Scott, backed by those of Charles Nolin, Thomas Harrison, and George Klyne. The division that Riel had feared had thus arisen, and he so far forgot himself as to denounce the three dissenting French delegates as traitors. It was now clear that if he were to carry the third and indispensable proposition, that the Convention should recognize the Provisional Government, he must act firmly, and he proceeded to act drastically. He threatened to shoot Dr. Cowan, and arrested him; he stormed at the invalid Mactavish and put a guard outside his room; he even arrested Bannatyne when the latter sought to discover the plight of Cowan and Mactavish.

Riel's use of force, intended to demonstrate the powerlessness of the Hudson's Bay Company, did not at this point coerce the Convention into immediate agreement, and on February 7 a "List of Rights", the second of the Resistance, was laid before the Commissioners.<sup>1</sup> Smith said that his instructions authorized him to agree to some, but that others

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, January 29–February 3, 1870.



would have to go before the Canadian government. He and the other commissioners then suggested that a delegation be sent to Canada to discuss the list with the ministry.<sup>1</sup> On February 8 the Convention agreed to accept the invitation and it was at this point that Riel insisted that his Provisional Government be recognized and that it be "proved that the Hudson's Bay Company was, if not dead, completely powerless!" He challenged those who opposed him with the fact that all functions of government had ceased.<sup>2</sup> The upshot was the despatch of a delegation to visit Governor Mactavish. The delegates asked him if he approved the formation of a provisional government, and if he would delegate his authority to one if formed. Mactavish urged them to form a government and restore order; he refused to delegate his authority.<sup>3</sup> If the words of the gravely ill and distressed man are to be sharply interpreted, Mactavish recognized the practical necessity of some agreed form of government for the interim. He refused, however, to delegate the powers legally his, and not yet formally withdrawn.

As a result of this interview, the English delegates agreed to enter a provisional government with Riel, and on February 10 a committee of three English and three French delegates, of whom one was Charles Nolin, was appointed to draft a scheme to set up such a government. Its report was accepted, in part because of an eloquent speech by James Ross in favour of the formation of a provisional government. It was agreed that there should be a Legislative Council of twelve English and twelve French members. The French Civil Council, it was understood, would constitute the French half, but the English parishes would have to elect representatives. It was also decided that the General Quarterly and Petty Courts would resume their sessions, and all justices of the peace would be retained in office except William Dease, who was replaced by Norbert Larance. The officers of the Government were elected by the Convention, chiefly by retaining the old officers

<sup>1</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, February 18, 1870.    <sup>2</sup> Begg's *Journal*, February 9, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, February 18, 1870; *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine* (Winnipeg, 1874), pp. 74-75, evidence of X. Pagée; pp. 80 and 81, evidence of John Sutherland.

of Assiniboia and of the French executive, except that James Ross was elected Chief Justice, Thomas Bunn Secretary of State and Louis Schmidt Assistant Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

It was over the election of President that there was some difficulty. The office was one of limited powers, as it had been provided that the President's veto might be overridden by a two-thirds majority of the Legislative Council. But the problem was that Riel was clearly determined to have the office, and the English were reluctant to have him. Ross attempted to evade the difficulty by proposing that Riel should be a delegate to Canada. Riel peremptorily refused. He did so not only because he was determined to be President, but also because he was resolved that the Convention should not elect the delegates. He made things easier for the English by promising to release Mactavish, Cowan and Bannatyne at once, and the other prisoners in a few days. The new government, he declared, would not be responsible for the acts of the old. Finally, in a scene not fully reported, since Begg makes no mention of it, and the report in the *New Nation* is a revised one, he became greatly excited and the Convention, although one English member, Alfred Boyd, refused to vote, elected him President.<sup>2</sup> Riel then nominated the Reverend N. J. Ritchot, Alfred Scott and Judge Black as delegates, and the Convention elected them. As a result of this procedure, it was not clear whether the delegates were delegates of the Convention, or of the Provisional Government.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, February 18, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 10, 1870, and Schmidt's *Memoirs* No. xv below. But even the *New Nation* reports that Riel told the representatives of the western parishes that there would be war in a fortnight if they did not support him. A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, February 12, 1870, reporting Riel to have been violent and outrageous during the convention. U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Report, Winnipeg, 1, Malmros to Davis, February 22, 1870, no. 26, in which Malmros reports the reconstitution of the Provisional Government dictated by Riel. Howe, not an eye-witness, told Taylor that Riel had intimidated the Convention pistol in hand : U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, April 28, 1870. But Thomas Bunn, a member of the convention, later declared that members were free to vote as they pleased : *Report of Special Committee*, 1874, p. 12.

<sup>3</sup> See Nos. VIII and XXVII below, for the view of Riel that the delegates were delegates, not of the Convention, but of the Provisional Government.

Riel had thus out-manoeuvred Smith. He had at last formed a Provisional Government recognized by the whole Settlement, and as its President he had appointed the delegates to Canada. His plans, so gravely threatened ever since November, were well on their way to completion. A Second Provisional Government had been formed, and it might prove to be, as the first was not, a complete civil government. But he had not the full backing of all the English delegates. The majority who agreed to the Provisional Government and to Riel's being President did so for the sake of peace, not because they accepted Riel's programme. As in October and in December, Riel had made his policy prevail by his command of the armed force of the *métis*.

## IX

Riel's power was immediately put to the test. On February 10, even as the recognition of the Provisional Government was being celebrated with heavy drinking in the saloons of Winnipeg, word was received that a party of nearly two hundred men from Portage la Prairie had come down to release the prisoners in Fort Garry.

Of the forty-eight prisoners captured on December 7 some had been released on condition that they leave the country, a few had escaped, and an unknown number still remained in custody. Their detention was of course, preventative; no charges were laid, no trials held other than the questionings, or "court martial", to see if those interrogated could be trusted to leave the country, or not to oppose the Provisional Government. Riel's purpose was simply to prevent the prisoners from forming a nucleus for a rising against his régime. It is doubtful whether his purpose was achieved, for the holding of the prisoners was at once a grievance to most of the English-speaking community, and a moving and specific reason, when urged in Ontario, for rising against Riel. Moreover, those who had escaped could not forget their still imprisoned comrades, nor the cause for which they had suffered imprisonment. Charles Mair and Thomas Scott were two who had made good their escape on January 9, and had



reached Portage la Prairie. Schultz, feared as the arch-enemy by the *métis*, had escaped on January 23 and had made his way to Kildonan, where he was sheltered by Robert McBeth. While the search parties rode by McBeth's house, he sat upstairs, revolver in hand, determined not to be taken a second time. When the search died down, he made his way to St. Andrew's. Schultz was thus at large during the election and session of the Convention of Forty, and he may have tried to influence its deliberations. If so, he failed.<sup>1</sup> He then began to work on the loyal Christian Indians of St. Peter's and those in St. Andrew's who had listened to Dennis in December. Scott and Mair at Portage found many Canadians and Canadian sympathizers, amongst them the members of Hart's survey party. These people had long been talking of coming down to Fort Garry to release the prisoners, and now they were moved to act by the accounts by Scott and Mair of their captivity. This was the group which challenged Riel's newly established government. Early in February they began their bitter winter march. No one in particular organized the movement, and no one led the march;<sup>2</sup> but the command was gradually assumed by Captain C. A. Boulton of the survey party, who joined the party to try to keep it out of trouble.<sup>3</sup> By February 10 they had reached Headingly, and here they were delayed for four days partly by the weather and partly owing to the representations of F. T. Lonsdale,<sup>4</sup> a resident of that place.

While the Portage party was held up at Headingly, Riel began to release the remaining prisoners, as he had promised to do in order to facilitate the recognition of the Provisional Government. The released men were required to pledge themselves not to oppose the Provisional Government or disturb the peace, but no more. There is no reason to doubt that all the prisoners would have eventually been set free, although at first some refused to take the pledge, partly because they misunderstood its nature, thinking it required them to

<sup>1</sup> See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.

<sup>2</sup> Q.U.L., Mair Papers, Mair to Murdoch McLeod, April 17, 1925.

<sup>3</sup> C. A. Boulton, *Reminiscences* (Toronto, 1886), p. 101.

<sup>4</sup> A member of the Convention of Forty.

support the Provisional Government in arms if necessary, and partly because they had bound themselves to one another to act only as a group.<sup>1</sup> These obstacles were in fact removed later, and there is therefore reason to think that the appearance of the Portage party at this time was ill-timed and unfortunate.<sup>2</sup> It was indeed unnecessary, and its members should have gone quietly home, as Kenneth McKenzie, the representative of Portage la Prairie, urged them to do when he informed them of the formation of the Provisional Government and the promised release of the prisoners.<sup>3</sup>

The above observations are well founded if the only purpose of the Portage party was to obtain the release of the prisoners. There is considerable evidence, however, that the party was by no means clear as to how the release was to be obtained; that the use of force was contemplated; and that at least a display of force was planned. But the release of the prisoners by force would have been tantamount to the overthrow of the Provisional Government. Thus the movement for the release of the prisoners threatened to become one to put an end to the Resistance of the *métis*, as some of its promoters may have intended all along.<sup>4</sup>

English versions of the events of February 14 to 17 have recounted them as though the march of the Portage men was the central movement and the release of the prisoners the central motive of this rising. But of course the effect of success on the part of Boulton and Schultz in February would have been the same as that of success by McDougall and Dennis in December. It would have demonstrated that the Red River Settlement was not united behind the Provisional Government, and so would have hampered, if it did not destroy, the diplomacy of Riel. He himself saw the movement of mid-February as an effort by Schultz, first to defeat his government, and, second, to destroy his policy of negotiation

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 12 and February 15.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), Report of D. A. Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870, p. 5; "not only rash, but purposeless," Smith termed the Portage party's march.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., Diary of Kenneth McKenzie, February 10, 1870.

<sup>4</sup> All accounts of the rising of February are partial and confused. The basis of that in the text is for the most part to be found in Begg's *Journal* and Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.

with a united settlement behind him, as sanctioned by the Convention.<sup>1</sup>

The strategy which was attempted was, it would seem, on the basis of evidence given by Riel later and recorded by Begg in his *Journal* at the time, planned to confront Riel with the threat of attack from three directions at once. The Portage party was to move on Fort Garry from Headingly; the party raised by Schultz was to come up from the Lower Settlement; and a party under William Dease was to move in from the south, drawing the *métis* from the Fort by threatening their homes.<sup>2</sup> By whom this strategy was planned, and to what extent it was known to those engaged in the movement, or to what extent it was co-ordinated, is unknown. It was wrecked by Riel's capture on February 14 of William Gaddy, a half-breed scout sent by the Portage party to make contact with Dease. After his capture Gaddy was imprisoned and court-martialled, and later he disappeared. The rumour was subsequently put about that he had been shot; but actually he had been led by a firing party away from the fort, and at the last moment released and told to leave the country.<sup>3</sup> An attempt to arrest William Dease followed, but failed.

Riel had prevented the party from Portage from making contact with Dease, and because of that, the other two attacks failed to synchronize, but the Portage party on the night of February 14 daringly marched through Winnipeg to join Schultz. As they passed, they searched the house of Henri Coutu, where Riel sometimes spent the night.<sup>4</sup> At Middlechurch they met the Schultz party of English half-breeds and Swampy Indians, some two hundred to three hundred strong, advancing from the Lower Settlement with

<sup>1</sup> See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below, and Begg's *Journal*, February 17, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> The account of the fate of Gaddy is based on A. G. Morice, *The Red River Insurrection*, p. 274.

<sup>4</sup> The episode is well attested; see Boulton, *Reminiscences*, p. 105, and Begg's *Journal*, February 15; the act was later to be cited against Thomas Scott, one of the search party, but it is hard to believe that the purpose was other than to hold Riel as hostage; some are reported, however, to have said that they would have shot Riel; R. G. MacBeth, *The Making of the Canadian West* (Toronto, 1905), p. 74.



one small cannon. The combined parties moved back to Kildonan, where they tried to persuade the Scots to join them, and to settle on a plan of action. As there were no acknowledged leaders, and as the clergy were opposed to violence and the Scots reluctant, there was much confusion, which was increased by the shortage of food and shelter for such a large body of men. But the main cause of confusion, it may be conjectured, was the difference between those who wished merely to obtain the release of the prisoners and those who also wished to overthrow, or at least withdraw from, the Provisional Government.

At Fort Garry, meanwhile, the French had begun to rally to Riel's support, as they had in December, and to prepare the Fort for defence. But no unusual precautions were taken on February 15. Riel seems to have been hurt and angered by the demonstration of hostility, but not to have feared an actual attack.

As the two sides were preparing for what they hardly knew, a sudden and romantic intervention was made by Miss Victoria McVicar, a young Canadian lady and a relative of the Sutherlands of East Kildonan, whom she was visiting. Miss McVicar came to Bannatyne on the evening of February 15, perhaps carrying a message from the encampment at Kildonan,<sup>1</sup> and went with him to the Fort. There they found Riel administering to the prisoners the oath, or pledge, not to oppose the Provisional Government, the taking of which was the condition of their release. Miss McVicar and Bannatyne helped to overcome the scruples of those prisoners who had refused to take the oath, and all were freed.<sup>2</sup> Thus Riel kept his promise to the Convention, even in face of the rising against him, and the alleged purpose of the rising ceased to exist.

If that alone was the purpose of the followers of Schultz and Boulton, the time had come to go home. But there were those,

<sup>1</sup> G. D. McVicar (no relation) said a message was sent asking for the release of the prisoners; *St. Paul Daily Press*, April 1, 1870. Miss McVicar is the only recorded visitor from Kildonan, though Begg does not say that she bore a message.

<sup>2</sup> The account in the text follows Begg. The American Consul wrote that the oath was taken in a slightly modified form: U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, February 22, 1870, No. 26.

of whom Schultz must be supposed to have been the chief, who wished to defeat the policy of Riel, if not to overturn the Provisional Government itself. The armed gathering remained at Kildonan during the morning and afternoon of February 16, and then there occurred the first bloodshed of the Resistance. One Norbert Parisien, a *métis*, had been captured by the English on February 15 in the belief that he was a scout of Riel's. Riel insisted that he was one of Schultz's followers. On the morning of February 16 he escaped, and in his flight shot and mortally wounded Hugh John Sutherland, son of John Sutherland of East Kildonan. Parisien himself was recaptured and brutally and, as it proved, fatally wounded by his captors.<sup>1</sup> The death of Sutherland, accidental and unpremeditated as it was, at once increased the tension, and underlined the dangers of the situation. The clergy urged peace.<sup>2</sup> A message was sent to Riel from the Reverend John Black of Kildonan, by Thomas Norquay, to say that the English could not support the Provisional Government.<sup>3</sup> This was, no doubt, an honest attempt by the Protestant clergy to keep the peace by compromise,<sup>4</sup> but the withdrawal of the English parishes would have wrecked the work of Riel and the Convention.

Riel's reaction to these events was forceful and perhaps cunning. He held Norquay under arrest; powder and horses were seized in Winnipeg; and two guns and a hundred men were sent to guard the Bishop's Palace in St. Boniface, where the English attack was expected to come from the shelter of the trees along the Red and the Seine. He told Norquay that if the English wanted a fight they would have it, and he professed indifference to their withdrawal from the Provisional Government.<sup>5</sup> But when further messages had passed, and it became apparent that the peace-makers were prevailing in the English camp, he released Norquay, and sent a letter to Kildonan which was conciliatory in tone and appealed indirectly

<sup>1</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, April 8, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See No. XIX below.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, pp. 24-25, Taché's evidence.

<sup>5</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 16, and Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below; also No. xx.

for support of the Provisional Government.<sup>1</sup> When another messenger arrived to ask if the Portage party would be allowed to go home in peace by a route behind the town of Winnipeg, he said that the proposal was a good one, and it was assumed that he meant they would not be molested.<sup>2</sup>

A crisis had been reached and passed, but it ended, like that of December 7, with a batch of prisoners in Fort Garry. On the morning of February 17, a large part of the Portage party—Charles Mair, knowing he was a marked man, had taken a more distant route—struck across the open plain north of the village of Winnipeg. Suddenly a band of horsemen and foot soldiers under Lépine and O'Donoghue swept out from Fort Garry and headed toward the party trudging through the snow.<sup>3</sup> Boulton ordered that no resistance be offered. The Portage men were surrounded and brought to the Fort, not aware that they were to be captives, and soon they occupied the quarters just vacated by the prisoners they had come to release.

Why the Portage party was thus captured is an unsettled question. Riel is not known to have ordered it. Whether he had promised a safe passage, as those who talked with him on the evening of February 16 thought, or merely approved of their intention to keep their distance, cannot be decided. The capture fits into no known plan of Riel's, for he had, perhaps only momentarily, professed to accept the withdrawal of the English from the Provisional Government. He may, of course, have already formed a plan to capture the party, in order to force a renewed recognition of his régime; but to accept this conjecture would seem to be to anticipate both the course of events and Riel's reaction to them. The impulsive action, as it

<sup>1</sup> See note 1, p. 312 to Begg's *Journal*.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), report of D. A. Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870, p. 5, where Smith terms it "a supposed promise". A.U.C., *Christian Guardian*, X (1), April 12, 1893; Boulton, *Reminiscences*, pp. 115-116; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, Bishop Machray to de Salaberry, February 19, 1870: "It is indeed most unfortunate that the party who believed that all was to be peace were interfered with at all." Smith's report seems to afford the explanation, namely that when Riel was asked if the Portage party would be allowed to disperse, he did not say "No", but did say "Good" when told their proposed route.

<sup>3</sup> The *Globe*, March 12, 1870, gives a vivid account by "Justitia".



actually seems to have been, perhaps sprang from the frustration and excitement of the *métis*; to capture the "Canadas" was a dashing thing to do. Yet if Riel owed the coup to the unauthorized action of his troops, he at once began to turn it to his own ends. The prisoners could be used as a lever to force anew the recognition by the English of the Provisional Government; for the unity of the Settlement, however reluctant, was a prime factor in his policy of negotiation with Canada.

Two tense days followed. The *métis* patrol scoured the Lower Settlement in search of Schultz. His capture, and his life, would have satisfied Riel, but he was not to be found. Then it became known that Captain Boulton was to be shot, with, Begg reports, three of his companions. They had apparently been tried, *in absentia*, by court-martial of the Military Council, and condemned to death for their part in the rising.<sup>1</sup> According to Begg's account, Riel agreed to spare the lives of Boulton's three companions when so urged by the sorrow-stricken parents of Hugh John Sutherland; but the *métis* chief insisted that Boulton must die. Riel's purpose was to force recognition of the Provisional Government as the sole legitimate authority in the North-West by executing a capital sentence upon a leader in the late rising against it. If the English would not co-operate in the Second Provisional Government, they must be awed into a passive acceptance of his régime by so stern an example. Canada must be made to take the Resistance seriously, Riel insisted, as he did again a few days later, on an even more fateful occasion when he said to Donald Smith: "We must make Canada respect us."<sup>2</sup>

Further applications for mercy were made by Archdeacon

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), report of D. A. Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870, p. 6. Smith says Boulton was tried by court martial, but makes no reference to his companions, probably Thomas Scott, John Taylor and George Parker, also leaders of the Portage party, or of the intervention of Mr. and Mrs. Sutherland. Red River tradition attributes Boulton's reprieve to them; probably what actually occurred is approximated in the text.

Boulton, in his *Reminiscences*, makes no reference to a court-martial, which is the basis for the suggestion that he was condemned *in absentia*; see n. 8, p. 316.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), report of D. A. Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870, p. 8.

McLean and other clergy, and by Mrs. Mactavish, Mrs. Bannatyne and Mrs. Begg, the American Consul, Miss McVicar, and James Ross. Riel refused to grant their pleas for Boulton's life; but he finally yielded to the counsels of Père Lestanc and Donald A. Smith. Boulton's life would be spared, he promised, if Smith would persuade the English parishes to elect representatives to the Legislative Council of the Provisional Government. This Smith agreed to do, and with the help of Archdeacon McLean he spent the next few days in hurried winter travel and urgent exhortation. As a result of their endeavours, all the English parishes elected representatives on, or by, February 26.<sup>1</sup> The Legislative Council was in consequence summoned to meet on March 5. Boulton's life had been saved, the Provisional Government reconstituted. But again it was reconstituted under duress; it did not rest on free consent, and the political union of the Settlement was forced and hollow.

It is true that Riel had had grave provocation. Not only had there been the suspected strategy of a rising on three fronts against the Provisional Government, but also the Swampies had risen again, and there had been renewed rumours of an attack by the Sioux, rumours which always arose when Schultz was active. That bold man had not been taken, and his influence with the Indians to the eastward was notorious. It was this danger which explains the frantic energy with which the *métis* had pushed their patrols into the Lower Settlement as far as the Stone Fort in search of Schultz. As the doctor had been outlawed by the Provisional Government and a price set on his head, there is little doubt of what would have been his fate had he been captured. After several days in hiding, however, Schultz had made his way to the Winnipeg river, guided by Joseph Monkman, and had begun a winter march by Fort Frances and Duluth to St. Paul. During the same days of strain and vigilance, Riel posted a force of *métis* at St. François-Xavier and at Lane's Post, an establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company west of St. François-Xavier, to guard against a descent of the Sioux and any further movement from Portage la Prairie. Thither Charles Mair had made his way

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

from Kildonan, and there at the end of February he too set out in a long march westward and southward to St. Paul, which was to bring him and Schultz together again. Riel had actually succeeded in scattering the protagonists of "Canada First" in the North-West; but being ignorant of their movements he could not be sure that they were not endeavouring to raise the Indians. That fear now contributed to the commission of an act which they, when re-united in Toronto, were to use against him for his overthrow.

At this point, evidence is to be noted of the effect of the strain of these days on the intense and excitable Riel. From February 24 to February 27 Begg records that he was ill with "brain fever".

Even yet, however, at the end of February, all might have ended peacefully. As it became apparent that the leaders of the February rising still at large were in flight, and that the English parishes, however sullenly, had submitted to his régime, Riel might well have relaxed in the assurance that his position was not now likely to be disputed. The rising against him had been not inappropriately punished—it is not impossible to argue that it had been legally punished—by the condemnation of Boulton and his companions. That punishment had been remitted, as an act of policy for a substantial return—the recognition, formal and public, of the Provisional Government by the English parishes in the election of representatives. With that, the account of the February rising was closed, and closed handsomely in Riel's favour.

It came therefore as an utterly unexpected shock to the Settlement to learn, on the morning of March 4, that one of the prisoners, Thomas Scott, was to be shot that morning. This sentence was carried out forthwith, and Thomas Scott, an obscure young man, became one of the names of unhappy fame in Canadian history.

## X

Scott had already figured in the events of 1869–1870 in Red River. Of Irish birth, about twenty-eight years of age, a



Presbyterian and an Orangeman,<sup>1</sup> he had come to Red River from Canada in the summer of 1869, and had found work under Snow on the Dawson road. With a group of Canadians and some Americans, he had gone on strike in August of that year for payment of travelling expenses. After two days Snow had granted their demand. The strikers had then demanded pay for the two days of idleness. This Snow refused; whereupon Scott and three other men seized him and threatened to duck him in the Seine river unless he granted their demand. Acting upon the urging of his assistant, Arthur Hamilton, Snow gave in and paid what the men demanded. This done, he at once came in to Fort Garry and laid charges against the men. A civil suit for aggravated assault was brought in November before the General Quarterly Court of Assiniboia. The jury found Scott and one of his companions guilty, with a recommendation for mercy. Begg clearly thought they might have been acquitted. Scott and his companion were fined four pounds and costs with thirty days to pay.<sup>2</sup> Scott is reported to have remarked in court after being sentenced that it was a pity they had not ducked Snow, as they had not got their money's worth.<sup>3</sup>

Scott is next found acting as scout or watchman for the Canadians who were guarding the "government pork" in Dr. Schultz's store. He went to Fort Garry to demand that the ladies in the store be allowed to leave. He was arrested by the *métis*<sup>4</sup> and was thus a prisoner even before the rest of the Schultz party was captured. As a prisoner he attracted no particular attention until his escape with Mair and others on January 9. Scott made his way to Portage la Prairie, where his story of the hardships of the prisoners was a principal cause of

<sup>1</sup> The above account is based on A.U.C., *Christian Guardian*, XII, April 26, 1892, "Reminiscences" of the Reverend George Young, said by the author to be based on a journal faithfully kept; and also, with respect to above details, on certain fragmentary documents now in A.U.C., including a statement by one Captain Rowe, commanding Scott's militia company at Sterling, Ontario.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.M., Records of the Quarterly Court of Assiniboia, November 19, 1869; *Red River Pioneer*, December 1, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, December 6 and 14, 1869, below.

<sup>4</sup> Boulton, *Reminiscences*, p. 133; see also Begg's *Journal*, December 14, 1869; A.U.C., Young, "Reminiscences", *Christian Guardian*, XII, April 19, 1892.

the formation and march of the Portage party.<sup>1</sup> When the party passed through Winnipeg it was he, with Captain Boulton and Murdoch McLeod, who entered Henri Coutu's house in the hope of capturing Riel. He attracted no mention at Kildonan, nor when captured with the Portage party on February 17. Soon, however, he as well as Murdoch McLeod, Charles Power and George Parker, became unfavourably known to the guards as defiant and outspoken prisoners.

This, so far as it has been recovered, is the record of Thomas Scott's part in the events of 1869-1870 in Red River, except that it should be added that the Reverend George Young, who attended Scott in his last hurried hours, found him a contrite Christian and a brave man.<sup>2</sup> He left savings of \$103.50 with Young, having obviously been neither a wastrel nor a drinker.<sup>3</sup> And Young learned that his former captain of militia testified that he was a good soldier and a good Orangeman. His whole story creates a general impression which is confirmed by the fact that those who knew him in Red River at least respected him. The impression is that of a bold, out-spoken, somewhat headstrong young man, perhaps too assertively loyal, perhaps temperamentally inclined to fanaticism,<sup>4</sup> but not criminal and

<sup>1</sup> Boulton, *Reminiscences*, p. 101.

<sup>2</sup> A.U.C., "Reminiscences", *Christian Guardian*, XII, April 19, 1892.

<sup>3</sup> A.U.C., the Reverend George Young file.

<sup>4</sup> His brother Hugh wrote to Macdonald on April 6 (P.A.C., 102, Macdonald Papers), "Sir,

"As there are those in your cabinet who still doubt the correctness of my brother's execution, I feel it my duty to inform you that I have received a letter from the Rev. Mr. Young Wesleyan Methodist minister at Fort Garry, and who was with my brother to the last, giving full particulars of the atrocious murder.

"I have had the letter published in the Toronto papers which I hope will set at rest all doubting on the matter.

"It is of no use for me at this time to give expression to my feelings on this subject. Suffice it to say that my brother was a very quiet and inoffensive [sic] young man, but yet where principle and loyalty to his Queen & country were at stake a thoroughly brave and loyal man, for this cause he lost his life, and for this cause I trust your government will leave nothing undone to meet [sic] out the punishment due those rebels and murderers. If not his blood shall I require at their hands.

"Your humble & loyal servant

Hugh Scott

38 Temperance Street, Toronto."

Such grief must be respected, but the last sentence does suggest a mind overstrained.

not unbalanced. There have been thousands of Protestant Irish Canadians of his type, and Scott would in all probability have worked hard, prospered moderately and died unknown, had he not come into conflict with Riel and the Resistance of the *métis*. Why, then, was he shot? What did Scott do, or what was there in him, to provoke the fate that so suddenly overtook him?

Scott was tried by "court-martial" on the charge of insubordination and striking his guards.<sup>1</sup> (It is to be noted

<sup>1</sup> A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, April 6, 1870. "I also regret to state that a prisoner named Scott, was shot by order of a French Court Martial on 4 March. His offence was, I believe, insubordination." It is said, and on oath, that the charge included breaking an oath not to take up arms against the Provisional Government; *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine*, p. 59, evidence of Joseph Nolin, secretary of the "council of war" which tried Scott. This is probably to be dismissed, as Scott was most unlikely to have taken such an oath; he was not paroled, but escaped. Smith's circumstantial report of his conversation with Riel when pleading for Scott suggests no charge other than insubordination; the taking up of arms in February is referred to, but not as a charge. (C.S.P., 1870 (12), Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870, p. 8.) The most conclusive evidence is found in the Taylor Papers of the Minnesota Historical Society, Taylor to Hamilton Fish, May 24, 1870, in which Taylor reported that it was generally held in Ottawa in April that the execution of Scott "was unnecessary to the maintenance of the Provisional Government, and therefore criminal", but that he had it from Donald A. Smith that Riel had defended the act exclusively on the ground that it was necessary to avoid bloodshed, that the capture of the party in February was caused by exasperation of *métis* troops, that Scott and other prisoners believed the *métis* could be defied with impunity, and carried insubordination to the point where it became almost impossible to prevent the guards retaliating. This has the authentic ring of the private talk of practical men. But see A. H. de Trémaudan, "The Execution of Thomas Scott", *Canadian Historical Review* VI (3), September 1925, and his "Letter of Louis Riel and Ambroise Lépine to Lieutenant-Governor Morris, January 3, 1873," *Canadian Historical Review* VII (2), June, 1926, in both of which it is argued that Scott's execution *had* a political character. Riel indeed was to advance political reasons for the act (see his *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below) namely, that the insubordination of the prisoners was thought to be linked with signs of unrest in the western settlements and among the Indians. But this is *ex post facto*. It was, of course, inevitable that Riel—and his defenders—should endeavour to provide a political defence of the act which went far to destroy his political programme. The contemporary belief that Riel had Scott shot to bind his people to him against the influence of the approaching Taché by complicity in crime (A.U.C., Young, "Reminiscences", *Christian Guardian*, XII, April 26, 1892; Boulton, *Reminiscences*, p. 128) seems to be unfounded. Riel did fear Taché's influence, but not to that degree, and the threat of Canadian attack had always sufficed to rally the *métis* to him.

It is to be noted that "courts-martial" were a part of *métis* custom, and were used



that the charge was not a political one; little, if any, parallel exists between the condemnation of Scott and that of Boulton.) The evidence remaining to support this charge is scanty. Scott does seem to have used defiant and perhaps abusive language; and there is no more reason to doubt than to believe that he struck his guards. He and Murdoch McLeod are said to have broken open the doors of their prison. For this he was put in irons in solitary confinement. He was warned by Riel to moderate his conduct. His insubordination continued.<sup>1</sup> It is to be noted, in extenuation, that Scott at this stage of his confinement is said to have been suffering from dysentery, and was apparently driven frantic by inattentive guards.<sup>2</sup> He violently opposed appeals by Riel and Alfred H. Scott for political support amongst the prisoners.<sup>3</sup> Did this behaviour, rash and perhaps unwarranted, amount to a denial of the validity of the Provisional Government? The question is fundamental, but the answer is surely in the negative. At any rate, things came to such a head that the guards threatened retaliation and even that they would shoot the angry prisoner. Riel then ordered Scott, on March 3, to appear before a council of war, or "court-martial". The February rising had of course kept the military régime of December in being.

The above, apparently, were the facts put before the "court-martial" of five, presided over by Ambroise Lépine, Riel's Adjutant-General. The procedure was entirely summary; none of the safeguards of a genuine court-martial was observed. Riel laid the charge, and is said to have acted as interpreter, and to have made the proceedings intelligible to the prisoner. The decision for death was by a vote of three to two, and Lépine concurred. So summary was the proceeding, so disproportionate was the sentence to the offence, that Young, to maintain discipline on the buffalo hunt. They were introduced, along with other military usages, by the Nor'Westers in the struggle over Selkirk's colony.

<sup>1</sup> Trémaudan, "Letter of Louis Riel, etc.", pp. 230-231, and Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. XXVII below.

<sup>2</sup> A.U.C., George Young, "Reminiscences", *Christian Guardian*, XII, April 26, 1893, p. 259; also press clipping of 1885 in the Young file contains a reference to the dysentery; see Boulton, *Reminiscences*, p. 127.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, C.S.P., 1870 (12), D. A. Smith to Howe, April 12, 1870, p. 7.

when summoned to minister to the condemned man, found Scott incredulous of the fact that he was to die.<sup>1</sup>

Such was the trial and condemnation of Thomas Scott. Why Scott should have been shot is still difficult to explain. His death cannot be accepted as a political necessity, as the execution of Boulton might have been; although Riel and his apologists have ever since defended it as such. As Joseph Howe exclaimed, "The man could not have known the line of his policy."<sup>2</sup> In Canada, the effect of the execution was to shock and anger English Canadians, many of whom had been not unsympathetic with the cause of the *métis*. In Red River, the English were shocked and angered also, but had to contain their anger. The *métis*, for their part, from that day to this have never doubted that the death of Scott was just and necessary. But if it was not a political necessity, it was simply a matter of discipline, and for this the punishment was terribly disproportionate. Continued strict confinement was in fact the only reasonable punishment in the circumstances, coupled with punishment of the intractable guards. It is of interest to note that a greater sense of proportion was shown in dealing with the other defiant spirits, McLeod, Parker and Power, who were merely put on latrine fatigue.

Either as a political act or as a means of discipline or even as an example, the execution of Scott is difficult to explain. Why then was he executed? Two reasons may be advanced. One is that Scott had so exasperated his guards that they had threatened to shoot him themselves. This they would almost certainly have done. For Scott belonged to that type of person, of whom Adam Thom was one and Schultz in certain aspects of his character another, who aroused that curious, inflammable hatred which was a characteristic of the *métis*. Scott, the Irish Presbyterian, the Orangeman, the militant loyalist, was the antithesis of everything the *métis* were—French yet Indian savage, Catholic yet superstitious, loyal to those they trusted, implacable to those they disliked. The protagonists of the conflict were the two extremes of the Canadian people. Aware of the difference, Scott may have created an impression of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> P.A.C. : *Debates (House of Commons)*, 1870, May 3.

conscious superiority, unforgiveable by a sensitive and primitive people. The conflict of the ill and defiant prisoner and the inflamed guards was shaping toward bloodshed, and Riel was forced to hold the court-martial to regularize what was inevitable. The execution of Scott was preferable to his murder. Thus, as twice before, the hand of Riel was forced, at least in part, by the *métis* he had roused and made the instrument of his purpose.

The second reason for Scott's death, however, is the one later urged by Riel himself in specific terms, but expanded beyond reason by his apologists. At the beginning of March, Riel was faced with contemptuous defiance amongst the prisoners taken on February 17; with rumours and fears of an Indian attack; with the determination of the people of Portage, as he believed, to repudiate the Provisional Government at the first opportunity,<sup>1</sup> despite the election of the delegates to Canada; and with the dawning knowledge that Schultz and Mair were racing to Ontario to discredit before their arrival the delegates whose departure had been delayed by the rising of February 14. Riel's justification was therefore that he saw a connection between the defiance within Fort Garry and the unrest outside; and he resolved to still both with one decisive act.<sup>2</sup> Scott was condemned by what was, even in the fairest construction, a summary trial; and Riel refused to alter the sentence except for a delay of a few hours for spiritual preparation.

This defence is a political one, earnestly and no doubt honestly urged. But there must be hesitation in accepting it for if the execution of Scott was a political act, it was, by the same token, a political blunder. The shooting of Scott was a final and fatal departure from Riel's original design of union and negotiation. This he was percipient enough to foresee. The Provisional Government had been recognized, but only after threats had been used. It was his duty and right to maintain it, but only with the minimum coercion possible. To use violence was to confess that his government did not rest on

<sup>1</sup> Trémaudan, "The Execution of Thomas Scott", p. 8; A.U.C., Young, "Reminiscences", *Christian Guardian*, XII, April 26, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.



union. Nothing had been more striking, during the course of the Resistance up to March 4, than Riel's avoidance of extreme measures. It seems therefore more in accord with the logic of the known facts of the whole situation to argue that Riel's hand was forced by the exasperation of the guards. Their fury, it must be noted, was caused not only by the defiance of Scott, but also by their belief that Gaddy and Dease had been about to burn their homes during the crisis of February, and by their continued fears of an Indian rising.

Thus the two explanations advanced for Scott's death have a common origin in the February rising. Once the rising had been put down, however, it would have been politic to ignore its worst features. But the *métis* were not politic, and Riel could not be because the peace and unity of the Settlement, he persuaded himself, were in danger and must be enforced. Canada must be shown that the *métis* were in earnest. The deed once done, it could only be defended as a political act, necessitated and justified by the whole course of the Resistance.

No further attempt was made to overthrow the Provisional Government. Indeed, the death of Scott appeared to be quickly forgotten in Red River,<sup>1</sup> though that was not really the case. Its swift and vital consequences in Canada, however, were certainly not anticipated in the Settlement.

## XI

With the death of Scott ended the fifth phase of the Resistance begun in mid-January when Donald A. Smith made his attempts to undermine Riel's position. The sixth phase comprised the development of the work of the Convention of Forty and the recognition of the Provisional Government. This required on the one hand the despatch of delegates to

<sup>1</sup> "The shooting of Scott was not looked upon at Red River as a serious drawback to an early settlement with the Dominion Government. . . . I am quite sure that even Riel regretted the execution of Scott and it was very generally regretted thro'out the Settlement on account of the probability it would have of making the feeling against Red River still more general in Canada." P.A.C., Secretary of State for the Provinces, 1870 ; 78, J. J. Hill to Howe, April 22, 1870.

Canada and on the other the re-establishment of civil law, the re-opening of business, particularly by the Hudson's Bay Company, and, as a secondary consequence, the keeping of the peace in the fur-trade country to the north-west.

The opening of the new phase was dominated by the return of Bishop Taché to Red River. At the end of December the Canadian ministry had realized the inadequacy of the measures it had hitherto taken in its endeavour to conciliate the insurgents. It had therefore, through the Honourable Hector Langevin and his brother, Bishop Langevin of Rimouski, requested Taché to leave the Oecumenical Council and return to Canada to use his influence to quiet the *métis*.<sup>1</sup> The Bishop left Rome on January 13, spent January 19 in London conferring with the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company,<sup>2</sup> and reached Ottawa on February 9; and on February 17 he left for the North-West. It was known in Red River on February 10 that he was soon to return, and during the last days of February and the first of March he was daily expected.<sup>3</sup> Not until March 9, however, did the Bishop reach St. Boniface, where he was at once put under guard by Riel and confined to his Palace.

That Riel should have received his bishop in such fashion is surprising. He feared, however, that Taché, fresh from discussions with the Canadian ministry, and probably coming as a commissioner, would use his great personal influence against the Provisional Government; that he faced in Taché another Donald A. Smith. "It is Canada that passes," he is reported to have said as he watched the bishop go by.<sup>4</sup> Taché had indeed been in a strong position on his return to Ottawa. His rejected warnings had been more than confirmed; his help was now sought and he gave it at great cost to himself. He exacted his own terms, including the obtaining of copies of the Governor-General's Proclamation of December 6 with the assurance that it would constitute a general amnesty if the

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Special Committee, 1874*, p. 16, Taché's evidence.

<sup>2</sup> A.H.B.C., A 10/80. Notes of interview with Bishop Taché, January 19, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 10, 1870.

<sup>4</sup> Dom Bénoit, *Vie de Mgr. Taché* (Montreal, 1904), II, p. 59.

Resistance ceased.<sup>1</sup> Nothing was known in Ottawa of the February rising, and the death of Thomas Scott was in the future. Taché's task was to pacify the Settlement and prepare the way for union with Canada, a task he was to perform by his personal influence.

On his arrival, however, he was confronted with the existence of the Provisional Government and the death of Scott. If Taché had attempted to change the existing situation, he would have found himself engaged in a struggle with Riel for control of his own people. Before such a prospect, he first temporized and then accepted the situation. Soon he had established good relations with Riel; and the latter, devout Catholic that he was, readily came under the influence of the bishop, once his initial suspicions had been allayed.

The success of Taché's diplomacy was signalized by his meeting with the Legislative Council of Assiniboia. That body, which had been summoned to meet before the shooting of Scott, did not in fact meet until March 9, when there were nine French and ten English representatives present. The meeting was told by Riel that Taché had returned as a commissioner from Canada, and then it adjourned until March 15. On that date it was addressed by the bishop, who assured the Council of Canada's wish to receive their delegates. Then, professing to act under a sudden inspiration, he asked for the release of the prisoners. Riel granted the release of half their number at once, and promised the release of the remainder soon.<sup>2</sup> This bit of drama had no doubt been planned. What it signified was that Taché had assumed the responsibility of declaring that the amnesty promised would include those responsible for the death of Scott, and that the Provisional Government should proceed to despatch its delegates to Ottawa and to restore civil government in Assiniboia.

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Special Committee, 1874*, pp. 17-18, Taché's evidence. Professor Chester Martin is of the opinion that Taché obtained in Ottawa the terms which were to be embodied in the fourth List of Rights, and granted in the Manitoba Act (*Foundations of Canadian Nationhood*, Toronto, 1955, p. 427). Something of this nature is probable, but it is too much to believe that everything was settled thus.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.M., *New Nation*, April 12, 1870. Presumably the remainder were released before, or under Riel's Proclamation of April 9. See Begg's *Journal*, March 15, 16 and 20, 1870, below.



The first effect, however, of this *entente* between Bishop and President was to complete the pacification of the Settlement, for Taché was greatly respected by the English community. The second was to accelerate that diminution of American influence which had been going on since mid-January. The sudden departure on March 16 of the American Consul Malmros was caused by his embarrassment at the State Department's publication of his despatches from Red River.<sup>1</sup> He had appointed Major Robinson as Vice-Consul. On March 19 Robinson gave up the editorship of the *New Nation*, because Riel had brought it fully under his own control. Publication ceased until Riel found a new editor in Thomas Spence at the end of the month. Difficulties arose in the course of the transfer. There is no record of any payment made by the Provisional Government or by Spence to Robinson. The latter refused to give up the keys of the office, and, apparently in order to put pressure on him, Riel arrested two Americans, R. C. Burdick and H. S. Donaldson, for a few hours on March 29. On March 31 Robinson himself was arrested, but "arrangements were completed" quickly for the surrender of the keys.<sup>2</sup> The episode marks the end of such influence as the local Americans had had on the Resistance since the beginning of January.

With the Canadians scattered and American influence waning, it was possible to concentrate on the despatch of the delegates and the completion of the Provisional Government, the work which was cut short by the February rising. It might be thought that the drafting of the "List of Rights" and the appointment of the delegates to Canada by the Convention of Forty left nothing to be done except for the delegates to proceed to Ottawa with certified copies of the list. That, undoubtedly, was the intention of Commissioner Donald A. Smith and the wish and expectation of the Canadian ministry, now prepared to receive delegates from the people of the North-West and to discuss terms of union drafted by their

<sup>1</sup> M.H.S., Ramsey Papers, Malmros to Ramsey, March 15, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Malmros to Davis, March 16, 1870, No. 30; H. M. Robinson, Vice-Consul, to Davis, April 2, 1870, No. 32.

representatives.<sup>1</sup> Such, however, was not the view of Riel, even though he had wrung from the Convention the recognition of the Provisional Government and his own election as President. In his view the delegates were delegates of the Provisional Government, the only body capable of speaking for the people of the North-West, and the "List of Rights" was subject to revision by the Provisional Government. Before the delegates left for Ottawa, it was necessary therefore to prepare formal instruments accrediting them as delegates of the Provisional Government, and to supply them with official copies of the "List of Rights". The delegates also received instructions as to how they were to discharge their mission. These instructions enumerated those articles of the list which were mandatory, and those which admitted of negotiation. The clerical part of this work was performed by the Secretaries of State, Thomas Bunn and Louis Schmidt.<sup>2</sup> But some time between the end of the Convention of Forty and the despatch of the delegates the "List of Rights" had been revised, completely re-written and substantially altered. This work was carried out, it would seem, by the French members of the Executive of the Provisional Government. At least there is no evidence that Bunn, Ross, or Bannatyne were consulted, or agreed to the changes made.<sup>3</sup> The changes made were sufficient to constitute a new, and third, "List of Rights." Besides a complete re-drafting of the whole, the first clause, calling for admission of the North-West as a Territory, was changed to a demand for admission as a Province. A seventeenth clause was inserted, requesting that the Lieutenant-Governor be able to speak both French and English. Finally, a nineteenth section was added, requiring an amnesty for all acts committed in the Resistance and for all persons

<sup>1</sup> Taché had wired the List from St. Paul to Howe, and received a favourable reply ; *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 20, Taché's evidence.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.M., Red River Disturbances, letters of authorization to delegates, March 22, 1870 ; no copy of that of February 12 given in Riel's *Historical Memoir* is in P.A.M. ; see also Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.

<sup>3</sup> The text of the four bills was printed by George Bryce, *Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba*, "Two Provisional Governments of Manitoba," No. 38 (Winnipeg, 1890). The third had not been printed before ; the fourth had, by Archbishop Taché in the *Manitoba Free Press*, December 27, 1889.

taking part in it.<sup>1</sup> Here in the insistence on an amnesty, we find the theme which is henceforth to dominate the story of the Red River troubles and the future of Riel.

It was this list which the delegates were authorized and instructed to use as the basis for negotiation with Ottawa, but it was not the final list. Once more it was re-written in secrecy. The reason is unknown; the only apparent new element in the situation was Taché himself, and his later defence of the fourth list, at the passage of the Manitoba School Act in 1890, may indicate that he had inspired its preparation. The first clause in the fourth list called for admission as a Province, for which no name was suggested, but which was to have not only an Assembly, but a Senate. A seventh clause was added, demanding the institution of separate, denominational schools. Whether all the delegates, or only Ritchot, were given this fourth and final list is not clear. Nor is it known what list was used in the negotiations at Ottawa. What actually happened was that a Province was created and a separate school system authorized, without public objection or comment from any delegate, or indeed, any individual, for nineteen years after 1870. The question of separate schools, it is to be noted, had not been raised before in the course of the Resistance. Red River had denominational schools, and everyone no doubt assumed that they would be continued. The only record of the point being raised during the Resistance is a letter from Joseph Lemay of Pembina to Taché, and it may be that this American French-Canadian, about to remove to St. Norbert, called to Taché's attention the need of a definite provision for separate Catholic schools.<sup>2</sup> However that may be, the delegates, authorized and instructed by the Provisional Government as its agents, left for Ottawa, the Reverend N. J. Ritchot and Alfred H. Scott on March 22, Judge Black, after many doubts, on March 24.

While preparing the instructions for its delegates, the Provisional Government had also been engaged in making

<sup>1</sup> The text of the third list is No. xxiii below.

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Lemay to Taché, March 12, 1870. In Lemay's opinion, Americans were secularist fanatics, devoted to public schools. The Catholics of Minnesota, he pointed out, were taxed to support them, and received not a cent for separate schools.



ready for the re-establishment of a civil régime. The Legislative Council, after hearing Taché in its session of March 15, had continued to sit to hear Riel speak of his plans. He declared his intention of allowing the Hudson's Bay Company to resume its commercial operations, and his purpose of conducting the Provisional Government as much like the government of Assiniboia as possible. As for himself, he would gladly make way when a duly authorized governor came.

This session, with Taché's skilful act of conciliation and Riel's moderate and sensible tone, was a not inauspicious beginning. It aimed at washing out the recent past, with its violence and misunderstanding, and at establishing a peaceful interim régime until the union with Canada, which every one now expected, had been concluded. The Council proceeded to appoint a committee to draw up a constitution for the Provisional Government, and then it adjourned to await the report. Why a new constitution, rather than that hastily devised by the Convention of Forty, was thought necessary does not appear. That constitution would surely have done for an interim régime of a few months' duration. Probably we have here a further example of that obstinate resolution of Riel's, in this instance little more than pedantry, which had made the Resistance formidable and which now required that the play be played out to the end.

The committee reported first on March 22, and on March 28 it was decided that the work of devising a new constitution and laws was a matter requiring more time. Accordingly the Council adjourned for a month, having appointed a new committee to continue the work on the constitution, one to revise the laws of Assiniboia, and one to report on the difficult matter of the "hay privilege".

The consequent postponement of the resumption of civil law was not welcomed in the Settlement, and Begg reports that there were grumblings. The renewal of the commercial life of the Settlement by an arrangement with the Hudson's Bay Company could not be similarly delayed. The long Red River winter was ending; in a month the river would be clear of ice and the grass springing on the prairie. The boat brigades would soon have to be on their way; the cart brigades of the

winterers would be creaking down to Fort Garry. The hurried summer season of the fur-trade was coming, and if it passed with the commerce of the country at a standstill as it had been since the arrest of Cowan and Mactavish on February 5, not only the great Company and the free traders, but every one in the Settlement, including the *métis*, would suffer. In the last days of March, therefore, Riel was engaged in urgent and forceful negotiations with Mactavish. It was not a simple matter of giving permission for trade to be resumed. Riel had to provide for the future of his régime and for the contingency of the negotiations with Canada breaking down. His government had no revenue, save for the funds seized in December. He therefore had to borrow from the only possible source, the Company, and Mactavish's reluctance to lend in December was even greater in March. If trade was to be resumed, moreover, money had to be put into circulation, for, as Begg notes, hoarding during the troubles had almost dried up the supply. Only the Company could furnish the needed cash, and it must therefore be induced to issue its bills of credit on London and its local currency. On the other hand, the resumption of trade by the Company depended upon the security of its northern posts, and this was in doubt, after what had happened at Fort Garry. At Shoal River, in the Swan Lake district, and at Oak Point on Lake Manitoba, local *métis* had already levied tribute, and they had been troublesome at other posts.<sup>1</sup> Only Riel could offset the example of the seizure of Fort Garry by an appeal to his people, and he must therefore undertake to keep the *métis* and Indians of the farther North-West quiet.

On this basis, brought about by the weakness of the Company's position and the immediate strength of Riel's, who was in a position to seize the furs in all the posts of the North-West, a bargain was concluded on March 28. What the Company agreed to do is recorded in a memorandum signed by Mactavish; what Riel promised can only be deduced from what he did. The Company undertook, in return for the freeing of its trade, to lend the Provisional Government £3000,

<sup>1</sup> Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers*, p. 406 and p. 408; "When the Métis Rebelled," (*The Beaver*, June, 1941, p. 8).

with a further £2000 in the event that the negotiations with Canada did not go smoothly, and £4000 worth of provisions for the "military administration of the Provisional Government".<sup>1</sup> On April 7 a messenger left for the North-West posts with a circular letter composed by Louis Schmidt and his friend, the French soldier of fortune, Captain Gay. The circular urged the *métis* of the North-West to unite with those of Red River in support of the Provisional Government, to respect property and keep the peace, and threatened punishment for those who failed to do so.<sup>2</sup> On April 19 Riel issued his "Proclamation to the people of the North-West", in which he proclaimed a general amnesty, announced that the Hudson's Bay Company would resume trade, pointed to the favourable attitude of Canada, and urged all to unite in support of the Provisional Government.<sup>3</sup> The way was thus prepared for the year's business to be done, and in fact the trade of 1870 was little disturbed by the troubles of the winter.

Slowly life in Red River was beginning to resume its usual course. Business revived and money began to circulate. There were more rumours of attack by the Portage Sioux and and of Canadian plotting; but both came to nothing. The only incident of note was the unheralded and unexplained raising of the Union Jack over Fort Garry on April 20. What prompted this action then is unknown, but its purpose is clear. The protestations of loyalty to the British Crown with which the Resistance began were now symbolized in the raising of the Union Jack. Riel's position would have been stronger and much trouble would have been avoided had it been flown continuously from December 10. But it must be remembered that the Union Jack had not customarily been flown before in the North-West. The Hudson's Bay Company flew a red flag with the letters H.B.C. on it. Schultz had challenged the Company in the summer of 1869 by flying a Union Jack with "Canada" upon it. Now a *métis*, though engaged in resistance to unconditional union with Canada, ran up the Union Jack without a legend for the first time it had been flown since the

<sup>1</sup> A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to Smith, April 6, 1870; E 9/1, Riel to Mactavish, March 28, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See No. xxv below.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, April 9, 1870.



troops had been withdrawn in 1861. A dispute with O'Donoghue followed, in which Riel insisted on the Union Jack being kept flying, rebuked O'Donoghue as an annexationist, and declared that, if the flag of the Provisional Government was kept flying, it must be in company with the Union Jack. And so it was done, Schultz's flag staff being brought to fly the flag of the Provisional Government. When the Union Jack was cut down on April 24, Riel had it put up again. It is not to be concluded that he had now made a choice between annexation to Canada and to the United States. Riel himself seems never to have been in favour of annexation. He had, however, on the very eve of the negotiations at Ottawa elected to break formally with the Americans and their sympathizers, and to discard publicly and irretrievably the bargaining power of American support.

Riel continued to abide by this decision, but one may wonder whether he did not regret it, when he heard that his delegates had been rudely received in Ottawa on April 11, and when on April 24 an American party arrived at Fort Garry as agents of the Northern Pacific Railway. The two events were entirely fortuitous, but their joint effect might well have been to persuade Riel that negotiation with Canada was to be difficult, if not impossible, while dealings with Americans would be easy and rewarding.

The delegates from Red River to Canada had continued their journey, as they had departed, in two parties, the Reverend N. J. Ritchot and Alfred Scott, with Colonel de Salaberry, in one, and Judge Black in another. As the former approached Ontario they were warned that it would be unsafe for them to cross that province on their way to Ottawa. Schultz and Mair had arrived there early in April, hard on the news of the shooting of Scott. That news had been received with indignation and denounced as a crime from the first. The arrival of the refugees who had suffered so much in the "loyalist" cause, and at the hands of the executioners of Scott, fanned a steady flame of resentment into a fiery blaze.<sup>1</sup> Nor was this anger merely spontaneous. The men of "Canada First", those in exile from Red River and those in Ontario,

<sup>1</sup> See No. XXII below.

deliberately made the most of Riel's blunder. They sought to discredit the delegation, and to have Schultz, the Reverend W. Fletcher and Dr. J. S. Lynch accepted as the true delegates of the North-West.<sup>1</sup> They sought to ensure the despatch of a military expedition to assert Canadian authority.<sup>2</sup> In a strongly British, strongly Protestant province, they were sure of a ready and vigorous response. By the time the delegates approached the Canadian frontier, Protestant Ontario was fiercely opposed to any dealing with the Provisional Government and its President other than by military force. Had Ritchot and Scott ventured to travel by way of Toronto, they would certainly have been arrested and imprisoned. The Canadian ministry, however, told them to proceed to Buffalo, from where they were escorted to Ottawa. This piece of smuggling was carried out deftly by the small but efficient Dominion Police, an excellent intelligence branch of the Ministry of Justice built up by Gilbert McMicken to deal with the Fenians.<sup>3</sup>

Ritchot and Scott thus reached the capital in safety on April 11; Judge Black, coming a few days later alone and unescorted, suffered no molestation. The Canadian ministers were not immediately ready to open the discussions; indeed until Black arrived it was not possible to do so, although Ritchot and Scott were visited by Cartier and Howe.<sup>4</sup> But Ritchot and Scott were arrested almost at once for complicity in the murder of Thomas Scott, on a warrant sworn out by Hugh Scott, brother of Thomas. As the administration of the law lay with officers of the Province of Ontario, and as the courts of Upper Canada, to which those of Ontario succeeded, had jurisdiction over the crimes committed in the North-West, the arrest was technically possible. But if the men arrested were delegates of a government, even a *de facto* government, whom the Canadian Government through its agents had invited to negotiate, they were, as Ritchot pointed out, though

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Memorandum by Taché to Privy Council, 1875; the *Globe*, April 16, 1870; a protest by Dr. J. S. Lynch against reception of the delegates by the Dominion Government.

<sup>2</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, April 27, 1870. "... the Canadian refugees ... want a conquest and a military rule until a Canadian emigration can outvote the present inhabitants."

<sup>3</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 244.      <sup>4</sup> A.A.S.B., Ritchot to Taché, April 13, 1870.

their hands were red with the blood of Scott, entitled to immunity until their mission was concluded.<sup>1</sup> This the Canadian ministry recognized, and the Colonial Office was emphatic on the point. In the upshot, no doubt after influence had been exerted, Ritchot and Scott were discharged on April 21 for want of evidence, and resumed their character as delegates. But they were indignant at the treatment they had received, as was Riel when the news of the arrest reached Red River on April 27, and doubts began to multiply as to whether in fact negotiations with Canada could be concluded.

Before these doubts were resolved the American railway party had arrived in Red River. Its advent was quiet and the visit caused little comment, except that it was favourably noted that the purpose of the visit was an exploratory survey of a railway line from the east-west line of the Northern Pacific northward to Fort Garry. The party's character and private instructions, however, were more comprehensive than that. It was led by ex-Governor William Rainey Marshall of Minnesota. He came as agent of Jay Cooke, the great Philadelphia banker who had recently under-written the construction of the Northern Pacific. Into this great undertaking Cooke threw himself with all his force, and assumed both the task of building a line from Lake Superior to Puget Sound, and also of realizing the ambition of St. Paul to become the metropolis not only of the American North-West, but of the British North-West as well. Whether the realization of this soaring ambition required the political annexation of the latter or not, the advocates of the larger destiny of St. Paul were not clear, but obviously it would be convenient. Hence their intense interest in the Resistance of the *métis* of Red River. But in any event they were confident that the "natural forces" of topography and climate would make their city the railway hub of the continental North-West. No line could be built, they were confident, for many years over Canadian territory to Red River, but it would be easy to build one over the level plain of the Red River valley. To this end the St. Paul and Pembina Railway had been started.

Cooke now took over the franchise of the St. Paul and

<sup>1</sup> Prud'homme, *Ritchot*, p. 95.



Pembina from Watah to Pembina and planned to build it, as a feeder to the Northern Pacific, northward to Lake Winnipeg and perhaps to the Saskatchewan.<sup>1</sup> But if this were to be done, would it not be better to have the United States control the territories through which it would run? To many Americans, inclined as they were to exaggerate the strength of Little England feeling in the United Kingdom and the embarrassment of the British Government at the Alabama claims, the future of British North America seemed doubtful. Their doubts were, of course, increased by the Red River Resistance. Would it not be well, asked Jay Cooke, as he considered the situation, to get in touch with the Fenians, and end the matter quickly?<sup>2</sup> But he contented himself with the sending of the Marshall railway party in April.

Marshall was instructed to furnish a report on the problems of constructing a railway to Fort Garry and Lake Winnipeg, and a report on the political situation. He did both.<sup>3</sup> Their gist may only be guessed from the fact that no political action by the American government—and no filibustering by the Fenians and Cooke—followed. If the letter of N. P. Langford, a member of the party, may be taken to indicate the nature of the impression Marshall received and reported, it was that the negotiations with Canada were sincere, and were expected to be successful.<sup>4</sup> While that was so—and the reason implied was the general wish of the people of Red River—annexation to the United States must remain a remote and unlikely second choice. The Marshall party left Fort Garry on April 29.

<sup>1</sup> P.H.S., Cooke Papers, Cooke to Marshall, March 22, 1870. "We should like to extend to Fort Garry and Lake Winnipeg and ultimately beyond to the Saskatchewan, if we are encouraged to do so by our friends in Winnipeg, & you are authorized to make any arrangements necessary to carry out this design."

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Cooke to H. D. Cooke, April 14, 1870. "In your talk with the President [Grant] & Secretary [Hamilton Fish] tell them the shortest solution of this matter would be the Fenians, & if they say so, I will send for some of the leaders, & have the matter attended to in quick time."

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, Marshall to Cooke, May 22, 1870; neither, however, is in the Cooke papers, and it has proved impossible to locate them.

<sup>4</sup> See No. xxiv below. It was persistently reported by Malmros and his successor, Robinson, that the plan of the Provisional Government was to keep raising its demands until union with Canada was proved impossible. While Riel doubtless wished to secure the best terms possible (see Prud'homme, *Ritchot*, p. 102) there seems to be no

Neither the anger of Ontario nor the approaches of the American railway party had sufficed to turn Riel from his course. With growing doubts, it may be inferred, he yet pursued the way he had chosen. On April 26 the Legislative Council began its second session, which was to complete the establishment of the Provisional Government and bring about the restoration of civil law.

As reported in the columns of the *New Nation*, the Council approved the report of the committee on the constitution, which simply provided for a continuation of the form of government established by the Convention of Forty, but had a preamble stating that the Provisional Government was acting under the authority of the Crown of England.<sup>1</sup> The Council also approved the revision of the laws of Assiniboia as reported by the committee appointed to revise them. The revised laws were, in effect, the old ones codified. And it agreed with the third committee that the "hay privilege" should be converted into property in fee simple.<sup>2</sup> Thus when it adjourned on May 9, civil law was re-established for the first time since December 1 and the Provisional Government was left as a properly constituted, but *de facto*, civil government to administer the affairs of Assiniboia and await the coming of the Canadian governor who was to supersede it. The earnest of this was the reduction of the guard at Fort Garry to a body of fifty or sixty men.

All, however, had not been as harmonious in the proceedings of the Legislature as either the brief notices in Begg's *Journal*, or as the columns of the *New Nation* would lead one to believe. reason to question the sincerity of his wish for union; it is to be suspected that Malmros's and Robinson's source of information was O'Donoghue and that their reports reflect his wishes and their own.

Prud'homme states (*Ritchot*, p. 97) that it was proposed to Riel, presumably by Marshall, with inducements, that the Provisional Government should declare for independence as a preparation for American annexation. If, as Taché testified (*Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 42), Riel was ever offered \$4,000,000 it must have been on this occasion; the sum being, it is to be supposed, a total for aid in money and men, not a personal bribe.

<sup>1</sup> *New Nation*, April 8, 1870. This had already been carefully stated in a resolution of the Assembly on March 15; *ibid.*, April 2, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See also P.A.M., Record of Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, March 9-26, 1870, with acts following, 1-5.

The news of the arrest of the delegates in Ottawa reached Red River on May 2, and, as is understandable, deeply disturbed Riel. He proceeded to take precautions against a failure of the negotiations. The first was to lay before the Legislative Council on May 6 the text of the "List of Rights" and instructions given to the delegates; and with these a proclamation protesting against the agitation in Ontario.<sup>1</sup> In doing this, he appealed for the support of the Council. The English members, however, were so startled and angered by the changes and additions made in the "List of Rights", that they flatly refused to approve them. They refused also on May 7 to support a separate motion for the provision of a Senate in the constitution of the new Province. The refusal of the English members was reputed to spring from their determination not to take part in a request for an amnesty covering the death of Scott.<sup>2</sup> As a result, the Council adjourned with bad feeling between the President and the English members, and Riel and his immediate colleagues were left in office, but without that general popular support on which the Provisional Government professed to rest.

## XII

Now that Riel was committed to union with Canada, the Provisional Government established, and the negotiations with Canada about to begin, the Resistance of the *métis* entered its seventh and final phase. This last phase, which was to see the achievement of Riel's purpose, thus ought to have led to the successful conclusion of the Resistance. In fact it was dominated by the question of the amnesty, which, it will be remembered, the revised "List of Rights" had demanded and which was necessary if the troubles were to be ended. An amnesty for what were, in any reasonable construction, political offences, would not have been unusual or improper; for to deny an amnesty to people whose demands in the main

<sup>1</sup> See No. xxvi below.

<sup>2</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Robinson to Davis, May, 1870, No. 23; P.A.M., Records of Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, May 6 and 7.



were to be conceded, would be self-contradictory. To ask an amnesty was therefore reasonable; to expect it natural; to have granted it would have been at once generous and expedient. These observations apply to all the events of the Resistance but one—the trial and execution of Thomas Scott. But even if the Canadian government could have pardoned that one deliberate execution of the Resistance, for the sake of peace, the political temper of Ontario, influenced by the “Canada First” refugees, Schultz and Mair, would not have allowed any suggestion of general amnesty.<sup>1</sup> Thus Riel, as his aims began to shape towards success, found himself threatened with the possibility of personal defeat at the hands of the friends and avengers of Scott. And such a defeat might well lead to the undoing of his work and the destruction of his people.

Once more Riel, as in December and in February, had to deal by force with a situation which threatened to shatter his programme. Denied political support by the Assembly, he was compelled to turn once more to the military force of the *métis*. The possibility of the negotiations failing and of military resources being needed, envisaged in the agreement with the Hudson's Bay Company, had now, it seemed, to be squarely faced. If Canada refused, or only pretended, to treat, if its policy was only to play for time until the rivers opened, and then to despatch the military expedition for which boats were known to have been under construction, then the *métis* must be ready to deny the expedition passage at some chosen point on the rivers between Thunder Bay and Red River.

There are strong indications that Riel and his Council were determined to resist.<sup>2</sup> The Executive Council of the

<sup>1</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, April 27, 1870; Taylor reported the ministry disposed to overlook what had passed, but that the execution of Scott was likely to unite a majority in favour of extreme measures.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, May 24 and 27, and June 10; also U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Robinson to Davis, June 7, 1870, No. 39. “The Provisional Government have been, for some days past, agitating an armed resistance to the Canadian troops *en route* to this point, upon the grounds of no amnesty having been granted to political offenders, and the control of public lands assumed by the Ottawa Government.” See also Riel's *Memoir*, No. XXVII below.

Provisional Government met frequently during these tense days. Captain Gay began to drill the small force kept on foot by the Provisional Government, though perhaps only to fit it for its limited duties. There was a renewal of tension between the remaining Canadians, now all at liberty, and the *métis*.

If the Council debated resistance, as seems probable, one fact must have dominated their deliberations. That was that if there was to be opposition to a Canadian military expedition, it must be organized before the *métis* population dispersed on its summer occupations—the winterers back to the plains, the hunters to the buffalo hunt, the tripmen to the Saskatchewan and the Hayes. The tripmen would not leave until early June, the hunters until the end of June. But the winterers now coming into the Settlement from the plains in the early days of May, would soon, when outfitted, strike back along the Saskatchewan trail. Riel twice addressed them. What he said was not reported, though Begg declares they were not responsive.<sup>1</sup> It is improbable that Riel attempted to recruit them then and there, but it is legitimate to suppose that he urged them to give their confidence and support to the Provisional Government. Yet no evidence of any result has been found. There is indeed reason to believe that Taché and Thibault used their influence to persuade the winterers to be peaceful.<sup>2</sup>

On May 13, however, the day before the last of Riel's proclamations was issued, Bishop Taché received word from Ritchot that he and Scott had been released, but the news did not diminish the signs that resistance was being prepared. They continued, because of the news of the military expedition, commanded by Colonel Wolseley. The French during the rest of the month openly displayed their resentment at the despatch of an expedition containing volunteers, because among these, of course, would be the avengers of Scott and the friends of

<sup>1</sup> Begg's *Journal*, May 16, 17; the *New Nation* on May 20 reported that the meeting went well.

<sup>2</sup> Q.U.L., Mair Papers, Henry Eck to Enos Stutsman, July 9, 1870. That there was some readiness amongst the western *métis* to support Riel, Cowie bears witness in *The Company of Adventurers*, pp. 401-405.

Schultz. Riel, indeed, went to Bishop Taché early in June and declared that he must break off the negotiations and oppose the advance of the expedition if it were composed in part of volunteer militia. Schmidt wrote to Ritchot, expressing the irritation of the Provisional Government at the despatch of the expedition before it had ratified the Manitoba Act.<sup>1</sup> The bishop firmly resisted Riel's determination to break off negotiations, and repeated, on his word of honour, that the promised amnesty would cover the execution of Scott.<sup>2</sup> Riel was once more persuaded; the signs of a disposition to resist began to diminish, and the *métis* to relax somewhat, but not until June 17, when Ritchot reached Red River, was the tension wholly relieved. The grumbling against the expedition ended, there were no more meetings with the winterers, no more mention of Captain Gay's attempts to drill the *métis*. Now that the news from Ritchot seemed to indicate that an amnesty had been granted, along with the other demands of the "List of Rights", resistance was no longer necessary, and had indeed become impossible. The winterers were lost once more on the wide plains, and the *métis* host, so formidable in December and February, by the end of June had faded from the summer scene, the tripmen with the cart brigades on the dusty trails, the boatmen on the rushing rivers. There would be no ambush on the Rainy or Winnipeg rivers; no *métis* rifle pits along the bends of the Red. Riel no longer had at his disposal the force which had made the Resistance; and he had no choice but to tread, to whatever end it might lead, the path of conciliation and peace which he had accepted with so many doubts and misgivings. Henceforth the decisions which were to shape events were to be made in Ottawa.

In Ottawa the decisions that were to govern the political future of the North-West had already been made. After the dismissal of the case against Ritchot and Scott, Judge Black had joined them, and the three delegates had sought in a letter from Ritchot dated April 22, an interview with the Canadian ministry. The Cabinet had appointed Sir John Macdonald and Sir Georges-Etienne Cartier to meet the delegates from

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S.B., Schmidt to Ritchot, June 10, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below; also No. xxix.



the North-West. A struggle of wills at once ensued. The Canadian ministers were anxious to keep the interviews in the nature of informal and private discussions with representatives of the people of the North-West. Ritchot was determined, and in this was supported by Scott, that there should be no discussion until he and his colleagues had been formally recognized as the accredited delegates of the Provisional Government. He actually threatened to return to Red River<sup>1</sup> if this were not accorded. Ritchot thus pursued in Ottawa the policy Riel had formulated at the beginning of the Resistance, had enforced in the Convention of Forty, and was now bound to pursue to the end, since only the recognition of the Provisional Government as legitimate would afford a defence of the shooting of Scott and a basis for the granting of a general amnesty. Ritchot succeeded in blocking informal discussion, and compelled the Canadian ministry to authorize the Secretary of State for the Provinces, the Honourable Joseph Howe, on April 26 to invite the delegates, as "from the North-West to the Government of Canada," to meet Macdonald and Cartier as representatives of the Government.<sup>2</sup> This Ritchot was content to accept as formal recognition, though its character as such is extremely dubious; and indeed a few days later Macdonald, under serious pressure in the House of Commons not to meet the delegates at all, denied that the ministers had recognized the Provisional Government.<sup>3</sup>

With this obstacle removed the discussions began, and they proceeded at an intense pace, in sessions lasting seventy-five hours in all, mainly between April 25 and April 28.<sup>4</sup> Few significant negotiations in Canadian history can be more scantily recorded. The basis of the discussions it is presumed

<sup>1</sup> Prud'homme, *Ritchot*, pp. 98-99.

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Howe to delegates, April 26, 1870. See text in Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below. Ritchot had described the delegates, in his note of April 22, as from the North-West, which suggests that the exchange was carefully planned not to exceed what the Canadian Government could accept. Riel dates Howe's letter April 27, Prud'homme (*Ritchot*, p. 99) April 28; the original is dated April 26.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.C., *Parliamentary Debates*, House of Commons, May 3, 1870.

<sup>4</sup> A.A.S.B., Ritchot to Taché, May 12, 1870; U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, April 27, 1870 and April 28 1870.

here was the fourth "List of Rights", as drafted by the Executive of the Provisional Government. What emerged was a draft of the Bill which, with only one significant alteration during its passage, became the Manitoba Act. Between the List and the Bill are many major differences. How the delegates were persuaded to accept these changes is a matter of conjecture.

It seems evident that Ritchot was the principal negotiator, with Scott as his seconder. Some attempt had been made to separate Black from his colleagues,<sup>1</sup> but it came to nothing; and Black, it would seem, co-operated harmoniously with Ritchot and Scott, and parted with Ritchot on good terms.<sup>2</sup> But there were some matters, such as the French language, separate schools, and the amnesty, in which Ritchot had a special interest, and with which Black had no reason for concern. Thus Ritchot emerged as the chief, and on the amnesty as almost the sole, negotiator. He bargained hard, and if he had known the pressure the Canadian representatives were under from the Colonial Office to effect a settlement, would have bargained harder.<sup>3</sup>

Even so, he was persuaded to accept major alterations in the "List of Rights", some of them in articles in which he had been instructed to make no concession.<sup>4</sup> The first major alteration was in Article 1, that which asked for the admission of the North-West as a province. The acceptance of this article as it stood would have brought into Confederation a

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Taylor to Fish, April 23, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> A.A.S.B., Black to Ritchot, May 24, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Prud'homme, *Ritchot*, p. 102. Ritchot's rôle and the existence of a List of Rights other than that of the Convention were known in Ottawa; see Public Archives of Ontario, Clarke Papers, James Ross to Clarke, House of Commons, April 25, 1870: "There seems to be no doubt that the whole trouble was caused by the priests. This seems to be confirmed by the fact that Father Ritchot brought a new bill of rights with him, the Catholic bishop and his priests having set aside the bill arranged by the convention. . . ."

<sup>4</sup> See P.A.M., Red River Disturbances, Letter of Instructions to Delegates, March 22, 1870: articles 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 15, 17, 19 and 20 were discretionary, the remainder imperative. It is with surprise that one notes that articles 1 (calling for entry as a Province) and 19 (for an amnesty) are listed as discretionary. The latter was later called, and treated by Ritchot as being, a *sine qua non*. See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.

province much larger than either Ontario or Quebec, as they then were; and since the provinces of the Dominion controlled their own lands and forests, it would have given control of the natural resources of the enormous area to the representatives of some fifteen thousand people. The lands of the North-West were needed for the construction of a Pacific railway and the attraction of settlers. The outcome was a compromise by which provincial status was granted, but only to a Province of an area little larger than the old District of Assiniboia. It was further agreed that this new Province was to be named Manitoba following a suggestion of Riel's.<sup>1</sup> Its creation was a generous grant of representative institutions and responsible government to the people of Red River, who had known neither in any formal way until the Provisional Government was created. But just as control of the lands of the North-West was retained by making it a Territory, so the lands of Manitoba were kept under federal control also; the new Province, that is, was in this important respect denied equality with the other provinces of the Dominion. This compromise the delegates accepted.

Similarly, the outcome of the negotiations with respect to land titles was markedly different from what had been demanded. The Canadian ministers, of course, assured the delegates that the Indian title would be granted and Dominion titles issued to all land holders in the North-West. But difficulty was found in the claim of the *métis* to share at the same time in both the Indian title and the privileges of civilized men. And it may be suspected that Ritchot strongly urged a claim not in the list, but which lurks in the background of the Resistance, the claim of the *métis* to a block of land to be

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S.B., Riel to Ritchot, April 19, 1870, Letter of Instructions (No. 8). "Le nom du pays est déjà écrit dans tous les coeurs, c'est celui de la Rivière-Rouge. L'imagination chérit celui de *Manitoba*, mais la situation semble exiger celui de *Nord-Ouest*. Les amis de l'ancien gouvernement se complaisent dans celui d'Assiniboia que n'est pas assez généralement aimé pour qu'on le garde. Choisissez l'un des deux noms de *Manitoba* ou de *Nord-Ouest*. . . ." (The name of the country is already written in all hearts, that of Red River. Fancy delights in that of "Manitoba", but the situation seems to demand that of "North-West". Friends of the old government are pleased with that of Assiniboia [but] it is not generally enough liked to be kept. Choose one of the two names of "Manitoba" or of "North-West . . .")



exclusively the possession of their "nation".<sup>1</sup> At any rate, the Manitoba Bill provided that 1,400,000 acres of land in Manitoba should be reserved for the children of half-breed families; that is, those who were minors would be granted reserves as were the Indian wards of the Crown, though the lands were to be held in severalty. It was an attempt, not necessarily doomed to failure, to preserve the *métis* nation in the Red River valley by ensuring to them land on which they might continue to live their corporate existence.

Some other matters which could not be made the subject of legislation were accorded different treatment than the "List of Rights" implied. The demand for uninterrupted steam communication apparently was a matter of verbal assurances only. Above all, the amnesty was clearly a matter for the Executive, as it involved the prerogative of mercy. Thus Ritchot, who made this his exclusive concern, could have been given no more than a promise, whether written or verbal. Such a promise would, of course, have sufficed, had a general amnesty been a matter of course. Since it was admitted that there was much justice in the demands made by the people of Red River, and since the Resistance of the *métis* had resulted in the substance of those demands being granted, the grant of an amnesty was only logical. The stumbling block was the shooting of Scott. The Canadian Government could not, in the face of the angry Protestants of Ontario and the Maritimes, consider the granting of an amnesty which would cover the death of Scott. Fortunately for them, a means of evasion was found in the sound argument that the acts requiring amnesty had been committed before Canadian jurisdiction had been established in the North-West, and in the further argument that the prerogative of mercy could be exercised only on the advice of the Imperial ministers.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* "Exigez que le pays se divise en deux, pour que cette coutume des deux populations vivant séparément soit maintenir pour la sauvegarde de nos droits les plus menacés. . . ." (Insist that the country be continued to be divided in two, in order that the two populations living apart may be kept as a safeguard of our most endangered rights.) *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine*, p. 52, evidence of Bishop Machray: "I think the desire for reserves was the cause of all the trouble; the French did not wish to be mixed but to be all together. . . ." This had been put to Machray by Riel a day or two before the execution of Scott.

While such contentions might free the Canadian ministry from an embarrassing situation, they did nothing to help Ritchot to discharge his obligation to his friends of the Provisional Government. The severe illness with which Sir John Macdonald was stricken immediately following the passage of the Manitoba Act left the completion of the North-West affair to Sir George Cartier, and undoubtedly the handling of the completion of the transfer was much affected by this fact. Cartier induced Ritchot and the other delegates to sign a petition for amnesty to be forwarded to the Imperial Government.<sup>1</sup> This was done with a covering despatch of June 9, 1870, from Cartier alone, in which he admits the fact of rebellion, but pleads the expediency of clemency.<sup>2</sup> The effect of the petition, however, was to leave the formal granting of an amnesty to the Imperial authorities, necessarily a matter of some time. Therefore Ritchot pressed for immediate guarantees in writing, and got orally from Cartier repeated assurances that all could be arranged,<sup>3</sup> and that the amnesty would precede him to Red River. From Sir Clinton Murdoch, the British Commissioner in Ottawa charged with observing the Red River affair, Ritchot received the oral assurance that the wish of the Imperial Government was to "pass the sponge" over all that had happened. But Murdoch warned Ritchot that he should not insist on particulars,<sup>4</sup> and Sir John Young, the Governor-General, was even more oracular. No one put in writing, for no one could do so, a pledge that a general amnesty would be granted, much less an amnesty explicitly to include the execution of Scott; but no one would say that the death of Scott could not be pardoned.

With these assurances Ritchot had to be satisfied, and he telegraphed to Red River on May 14 that the negotiations had been concluded satisfactorily, and that their friends approved the sending of the military expedition.<sup>5</sup> He set out for Red

<sup>1</sup> The amnesty question is too intricate for detailed treatment here; the reader is referred to that in G. F. G. Stanley's *Birth of Western Canada*, chap. VII.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, pp. 169-178.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 72; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 103, Sir T. C. Murdoch to Sir F. Rogers, April 28, 1870, in which Murdoch points out that it was impossible to grant a general indemnity, or recognize the Provisional Government.

<sup>5</sup> A.A.S.B., Ritchot to Bunn, May 14, 1870.

River, strong in the hope that the proclamation of an amnesty would precede him. This confidence was based both upon the assurances given, and on the growing interest of the representatives of the province of Quebec in the future of the French element in the North-West. Ritchot could now speak confidently of "our friends" in Ottawa, where a year before no French member had been interested in the North-West.<sup>1</sup> Thus the hope of an immediate Imperial amnesty hung before Riel and his clerical counsellors, during the anxious summer of 1870, bemusing their counsel and preventing any action, though in truth no action other than acquiescence in union with Canada was now possible.

The main part of what had been achieved by the delegates was known in Red River when the *New Nation* published the text of the Manitoba Act on May 27.<sup>2</sup> It still remained, however, to hear what the delegates had to report in person, and to be assured as to the purpose of the military expedition. Judge Black had gone from Ottawa to England, and Alfred Scott to New York. But Ritchot, after a few days spent in Montreal urging young French-Canadian lawyers and journalists to go to Red River to lead the French element in the North-West, set out on his return. During the first days of June his arrival was eagerly expected in Red River, and on June 17 he stepped from the steamer *International* at Fort Garry in company with Joseph Dubuc and Charles Champagne, who had joined him in Montreal. The general tenor of his news soon spread, that all had been granted, even an amnesty.<sup>3</sup> Riel and his colleagues were persuaded to accept the Act.<sup>4</sup> The Legislative Council was summoned to meet on June 23 to receive the report of the delegates, and to confirm the union with Canada. So generous were the terms and so enthusiastic Ritchot's report, that the Council on June 24 by the motion of

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, Ritchot to Taché, May 12, 1870; Ritchot to Taché, May 22, 1870, in which he names L. F. R. Masson and J. H. Bellerose.

<sup>2</sup> *New Nation*, May 27, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, June 20, 1870; A.A.S.B., Ritchot to Cartier, June 18, 1870, saying Riel was well satisfied with the Manitoba Act.

<sup>4</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Robinson to Davis, June 25, 1870, No. 40. Robinson says the executive decided on June 24 to act on Ritchot's report.



Louis Schmidt, seconded by Thomas Bunn, unanimously accepted the report and approved the terms of union embodied in the Manitoba Act.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of State for the Provinces was formally notified that the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia had ratified the Manitoba Act.<sup>2</sup> The procedure on which Riel had insisted, since November 24, even to the point of using the threat of force, was now completed. The Red River Resistance was ended, and the Provisional Government had fulfilled its main purpose, the negotiation of terms with Canada.

The Provisional Government remained in office, however, to keep order and to hand over the government to the Canadian governor when he should arrive. The development of events and the slowness of communication had created a vacuum in authority such as some had assumed to exist on December 1, 1869. The transfer of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories had been made from the Hudson's Bay Company to the Imperial Government on November 19, but it had been held up by the outbreak of the Resistance. Now, on June 23, with news of the conclusion of the negotiations, the transfer was made by the Imperial Government to Canada, to take effect on July 15. On that day the government of the Hudson's Bay Company would end, and the jurisdiction of the Dominion would extend to the Rockies and the Arctic. But it was impossible to send Canadian officials into the new territories for some weeks. How was the hiatus to be closed? Legally, it was done by appointing Sir John Young, the Governor-General of the Dominion, to be Lieutenant-Governor of the territories from July 15 to August 15.<sup>3</sup> Adams G. Archibald had been chosen to be Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the North-West Territories, and, as a neutral Nova Scotian who spoke French, his appointment was welcomed in Red River.<sup>4</sup> Apparently it was expected by the government that he would assume his duties on August 15. He was expected even

<sup>1</sup> *New Nation*, July 1, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 76, Governor-General 3, Young to Macdonald, June 16, 1870; the document itself has not been found.

<sup>4</sup> *New Nation*, June 10, 1870.

earlier in Red River. In the meantime, on July 15, the Manitoba Act was proclaimed, and the Province of Manitoba began its legal existence. But Archibald at that date had not even arrived in Ottawa; and there was no governor or government for the Province and the Territories from August 15 to Archibald's arrival in Red River on September 5 except that of the Hudson's Bay Company restored by Wolseley and D. A. Smith. Practically, however, the gap was closed by Cartier asking Riel through Ritchot to carry on the Provisional Government until the governor arrived.<sup>1</sup> Thus the way was prepared for the completion of the work of the Provisional Government by a formal handing over of authority by its President to the new Canadian governor. All the troubles seemed about to end in harmony and quiet formalities.

Two things were still necessary to such a consummation. One was an official confirmation of the amnesty which Ritchot believed had been promised. The other was that the governor should arrive before the troops, in order that they should find a civil government already established and functioning. The tone of the news from Ottawa, and the doubts as to whether the expedition was a precautionary or a punitive one, made the prospect of the previous arrival of the troops one that Riel and his colleagues could not face with equanimity. Many of them would be Ontario volunteers anxious to avenge the death of Scott, and the arrival of the expedition might be accompanied by the proclamation of martial law. So disturbing were these uncertainties that on June 28 Bishop Taché left for Canada to endeavour to make sure of the amnesty, to urge the Lieutenant-Governor to hasten, and to endeavour to have the military expedition stopped.<sup>2</sup>

The Bishop's journey became known, and his efforts were at once countered by a renewed agitation directed by the "Canada First" group. He failed to obtain any more definite commitment to a general amnesty, and at Hamilton was rebuffed by the embarrassed Governor-General. The Canadian

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Special Committee, 1874*, p. 77, Ritchot's evidence.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 34, evidence of Taché. Taché gives June 27 as date, Begg June 28; U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, August 16, 1870.

ministry still insisted that the matter was one with which only the Imperial Government could deal. But everyone in Canada knew that it was politically impossible, and many felt that it would be morally indefensible, to grant an amnesty covering the death of Scott. What had seemed merely regrettable at Fort Garry, was still thought unpardonable at Ottawa.

Nor did Taché have any better fortune in persuading Archibald to hasten his departure for Red River. The latter had business in Nova Scotia which delayed him. When he arrived in Ottawa, he gave Taché the impression that he was prepared to try to arrive at Fort Garry before the troops did.<sup>1</sup> But the Canadian Government ruled that the Lieutenant-Governor was to travel only over Canadian territory, and this ended the hope of Taché and Riel that Archibald would come by the quicker American route. Plans, however, were made for him to be met at the North-West Angle of the Lake of the Woods and taken overland to Fort Garry by the incomplete Snow road. The Bishop was confident that this would ensure his arrival before Wolseley could bring his men to the Red, a curious confidence in view of his uncertainty as to the progress of the expedition, and Wolseley's own uncertainty as to whether to use the land or river route from the Lake of the Woods. To complete the difficulty of discovering what Archibald really intended to do, there is evidence that he was advised by Cartier not to arrive before the troops.

Taché failed completely to have the expedition stopped. The reason for his failure was that, while the military and diplomatic considerations which had first suggested the despatch of a military force had ceased to be paramount, political considerations now made it a necessity. Macdonald had first conceived the expedition in November as a means of asserting Canadian authority and Imperial interests in Red

<sup>1</sup> *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 45, Taché's evidence ; p. 135, Archibald's evidence, where he says Cartier advised him not to arrive before the troops. His readiness to travel by the North-West Angle of the Lake of the Woods, however, seems to indicate a willingness to arrive before the troops did. See G. T. Denison, *The Struggle for Imperial Unity* (Toronto, 1909), p. 46, Taché to Riel (n.d.) and p. 47, Taché to Riel, August 5, 1870 ; also P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 75, Sir John Young to Macdonald, August 2, 1870.



River, and as a defence against an attack by the Plains tribes.<sup>1</sup> Canadian authority was now acknowledged in the North-West and not likely to be challenged by the United States. The Indian danger could be met by the formation of a mounted police, as Macdonald had intended. Thus the withdrawal of the expedition would not have imperilled Canadian interests in the North-West nor the security of the people of that Territory.

The expedition, however, had become the means by which the "Canada First" group, and the pride and anger of Protestant Ontario, proposed to wipe out the humiliations of December and February. It had also become the symbol of the government's impartiality, of freedom from undue influence by French and Catholic Quebec. The olive branch of the Manitoba Act now had to be balanced by the sword of Wolseley. Not even the possibility of renewed resistance could deter it now.<sup>2</sup> In these circumstances, the very composition of the force was of political significance. Macdonald had insisted that Imperial troops be part of the expedition. This was primarily to impress the government of the United States with the intention of the Imperial Government to maintain its sovereignty in the North-West, but the presence of the Imperial troops became necessary to ensure that the force did not become a punitive expedition from Ontario. For this purpose three hundred and fifty men of the 60th Royal Rifles were made the core of the expedition, with detachments of engineers and artillerymen. The Canadian element of necessity were volunteers, as Canada had no regular force in 1870. But the militia units of Ontario and Quebec were numerous and spirited, and had been brought to an unusual state of efficiency by the Fenian raids and threats of invasion from 1866 on. It was simple to balance an Ontario battalion with a Quebec battalion in the expedition. But that did not mean balancing an English with a French unit, because in fact the Quebec battalion was largely composed of English volunteers. Amongst these, and in the Ontario battalion, were some spirits whose main purpose was to avenge the death of

<sup>1</sup> P.A.C., Macdonald Letters, 516, Macdonald to McDougall, November 27, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Macdonald to Rose, March 16, 1870; Macdonald to Carnarvon, April 14, 1870.

Scott. The whole tone and temper of the expedition, indeed, from the commanding officer down, was hostile to the *métis* and punitive in intent.<sup>1</sup> It was the conviction of many of those composing it that the Red River Expedition was sent to put down a rebellion, even though the Canadian Government insisted, and Wolseley proclaimed, that it was "an expedition of peace".<sup>2</sup> There is some reason to believe, and little to doubt, that if the expedition had been disbanded, a filibustering expedition of Ontario volunteers would have been attempted.<sup>3</sup> The despatch of the expedition, in short, was a necessary attempt to keep the anger of the Ontario Orangemen and "Canada First" within bounds.

How the Provisional Government was to end, then, depended upon the relative progress of the expedition and of the Lieutenant-Governor. The expedition assembled at Prince Arthur's Landing in June. On June 30 Colonel Wolseley prepared a proclamation for forwarding to Red River in which he assured the people of the North-West that the expedition was one of peace, that half-breed or Indian had nothing to fear from it, and he called on all loyal people to welcome Her Majesty's forces. At the same time he wrote to Bishop Taché asking that the people of Red River should complete the Dawson Road to the Lake of the Woods for the use of the expedition. The proclamation was brought into the Settlement on July 20 by Captain W. F. Butler. When it was transmitted to Riel, he had copies printed and distributed.<sup>4</sup> When an appeal was made for men to cut the remainder of the

<sup>1</sup> Sir George Arthur, *Letters of Lord and Lady Wolseley*, II, p. 5, Wolseley to Lady Wolseley: "Hope Riel will have bolted, for although I should like to hang him to the highest tree in the place, I have such a horror of rebels and vermin of his kidney, that my treatment of him might not be approved by the civil powers." This is cited as an instance of the tone of Wolseley's correspondence during the great march of the Expedition.

<sup>2</sup> *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 38, Cartier to Taché, July 5, 1870; A.A.S.B., copies of Wolseley's Proclamation in French and English, saying expedition one of peace, with covering letter to Taché, June 30, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Andrew Lang, *Life, letters and diaries of Sir Stafford Northcote, First Earl of Iddesleigh* (London, 1890), I, p. 329: "Filibusters were said to be ready to go against Riel if troops were not sent—so Sir Stafford writes in the diary of his Canadian residence."

<sup>4</sup> A.A.S.B., Bannatyne to Taché, August 6, 1870.

Dawson Road, a French and English party was organized and put to work early in August.<sup>1</sup> The Settlement was preparing the way for the troops with the approval of the Provisional Government.

It was, however, a tense and unhappy time for Riel. Taché was still absent on his fruitless mission; his pro-American friends were steadily turning against him; and finally he quarrelled with O'Donoghue over the printing of Wolseley's proclamation.<sup>2</sup> His people were scattered; only the members of his government and the small guard remained at Fort Garry. The Saulteaux Indians were gathering at the mouth of the Red, partly in the hope of presents, but also to welcome the troops, who they hoped would end the hated domination of the French. The English were increasingly unfriendly; bitter resentment over the execution of Scott still smouldered; and many were jealous of the concessions made to the French by the Manitoba Act.<sup>3</sup> Now that representative institutions were assured, all the English looked forward to the arrival of the troops and the ending of the Provisional Government.

With every day the position of Riel became more isolated and precarious as he waited for the news of the amnesty, for the return of Taché, and for the arrival of the Governor. But he remained in Government House, determined to see the end of the play he had planned, and to be, as Cartier had advised Taché, "more loyal than any".<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *New Nation*, July 30, 1870; August 13, 1870. The appeal was a feint to disguise Wolseley's line of advance.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, July 23, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> A.A.S.B., J. H. McTavish to Taché, July 31, 1870 (quoted in part in *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 36), saying that the English would be displeased if Archibald arrived before the troops, as they wanted a period of martial law in which a few of the French party might be hanged. There was some danger, but not much, he wrote, that the English would rise if Archibald came in first.

<sup>4</sup> *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 39, Cartier to Taché, July 5, 1870. Riel, of course, did not see this letter, as Taché did not receive it until his return on August 23. It perhaps confirms the uncertainty of Riel's position to note that a close observer wrote at this time that Riel and his colleagues, in the absence of an amnesty, were left suspended between heaven and earth, and had therefore made all possible preparations for resistance if deceived; that is, any resistance could still plunge the whole North-West into war, with the Plains tribes and the winterers intervening; A.A.S.B., Lestanc to Taché, August 13, 1870.



On August 22 the first troops of the expedition reached the mouth of the Red; on or about the same day Archibald, apparently acting on his understanding with Taché, or perhaps not knowing the route the troops had followed, was approaching the North-West Angle of the Lake of the Woods. The troops, after their wonderful performance, were advancing steadily to their goal. Archibald, finding no party awaiting him at the North-West Angle, for none had been sent, had to retrace his course to the old canoe route by the Winnipeg river and follow the troops, now some days behind them. Not knowing where the troops were, Taché arrived at St. Boniface on August 23, full of assurances that the amnesty would come and Archibald would arrive before the troops by way of the road from the Lake of the Woods. But on the morning of August 24 Riel was called from breakfast in Fort Garry by one Colonel J. G. Stewart<sup>1</sup> with the warning that troops were approaching in hostile order. And on the plain behind the huddled little village of Winnipeg the men of the 60th Royal Rifles could be seen trudging forward in skirmishing order, their green tunics blackened by the squalls of rain. Here was no amnesty, no hand of peace from a civil Governor; Ritchot and Taché had been misled, and in turn had misled Riel. The Government founded on force had been undone by fair words and was now to be swept away by force. The determination of Riel to win recognition for the rights of his "nation" had clashed with the determination of Canada to assure its national future by the annexation of the North-West. Never, in the meeting of Dennis and Lestanc at St. Boniface, in the interview of Thomas Scott by Riel, in the pleadings of Ritchot with the Governor-General at Ottawa, had French and English understood one another, or recognized each other's purpose, or used the same words to mean the same thing. And now the tragedy, begun in misunderstanding and force, was ending in the same way.

Riel walked out of the south gate of Fort Garry, and crossed by ferry to St. Boniface, where he reproached the Bishop for his illusions. He prepared to leave at once for the border with

<sup>1</sup> Possibly James Green Stewart, Chief Factor, 1869, retired, 1871. If it was he, it is unknown why he should have intervened.

O'Donoghue, and mounting their horses, the two men gazed for ten minutes across the Red at the troops.<sup>1</sup> In their flight they lost their horses, had to swim the river, and nearly starved. On August 26, the late President of the Provisional Government and "founder of the Province of Manitoba"<sup>2</sup> limped into St. Joseph, footsore and embittered, a fugitive from the rioting volunteers in Winnipeg, an exile from his people and from Red River.<sup>3</sup>

What had he accomplished, this student whose studies were incomplete, the poet who dreamed of saving his people, the tyro in politics who sought to be a statesman? He, almost alone, had made the Red River Resistance. Without him the grumblings would not have found a voice, or the discontent a programme. By his programme of a provisional government and negotiation for union with Canada he forced a definition of the issues involved in the annexation of the North-West to Canada, of the character of Confederation as a self-governing union carrying self-government in its expansion, of the nature of Canadian nationality, a dual culture in political union, and of the growth and independence of Canada as a partner with the United States in the continental destiny of North America. But he had forced the issues and invited premature decisions on the annexation of the North-West to the United States, on the creation of provincial institutions where neither the wealth nor population necessary to maintain them yet existed. He was, as he was to claim at the end, "the founder of Manitoba", but there would have been a later and perhaps a greater Manitoba, without the Resistance. He saved the *métis* from immediate destruction as a people in the Red River valley, but not for long. The bulk of them were soon to move westward, sometimes under the smart of the very injuries he had sought to avoid, and in 1884 they were to call Riel back to lead them

<sup>1</sup> Q.U.L., Mair Papers, Diary of Lieutenant Redvers Buller, August 24, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> U.S.N.A., Department of State, Special Agent, Red River Affairs, Taylor to Fish, May 24, 1870; Taylor, a natural phrase-maker, first coined the title Riel was to claim for himself in his address to the court in Regina, 1885, when about to be condemned for treason in leading the Saskatchewan Rebellion.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., Riel Papers, Marguerite Riel to Madame Riel, August 31, 1870, on receiving word from Louis Riel.

again with the same programme as he used in 1869. And that proved to be the end for Riel, and for his people as a people.

It did not all prove to be futile, however. By the Resistance Riel saved the French element in the North-West from neglect and oblivion. He saved them both from the heedless aggression of Ontario and the parochial indifference of Quebec. By the Resistance Riel challenged Quebec to play a positive part in Confederation, to maintain French institutions throughout Canada and not merely in Quebec. He challenged Ontario to recognize that the dual character of Canadian nationality was not a temporary concession to necessity, but the foundation and framework of the federation. Riel, in short, forced the new Dominion to consider the full implications of the work of Confederation; and he demonstrated that Canada was not to be governed, as the North-West was not to be annexed, without the co-operation of French and English Canadians. Above all, the Red River Resistance revealed, in its full course and in full perspective, to what extraordinary lengths French and English Canadians would go, in spite of much mutual irritation and many mutual wrongs, to preserve a common allegiance and to share a common country.



THE RED RIVER JOURNAL  
OF ALEXANDER BEGG

November 16, 1869 to July 23, 1870



## PREFACE<sup>1</sup>

It will be necessary to give in this preface a short recapitulation of events that may serve as a connecting link between the past and the first pages in this Journal.

That which has been foretold for some time past in this settlement has taken place. The discontent that has been brewing amongst a large number of our settlers towards the new order of government proposed for them has at last culminated in an open and decided resistance by the French Halfbreeds in preventing Mr. McDougall and his council from entering the North West Territory. The indignation is likely to be very great amongst a large class of Canadiens [sic]<sup>2</sup> in the Dominion at this reception of their fellow countrymen and if it is (as it is very likely to be) put before the public in the light of an insult to Canadien honor there is no saying what results this feeling of indignation may lead to. But it will be well for the public of Canada to pause before it accepts the one side of the story until it also hears the other.

The days are past for coercing a people into anything that is utterly distasteful to them and Canada is not the power that will willingly insist on pushing measures that are found to be unwise it may be unjust at all events decidedly unpopular in this case. It is quite apparent here as it will be generally admitted in Canada when all the facts of the case are known that the government at Ottawa have made a serious mistake in the outset of their assuming the rule over the North West, and only ignorance of the country and the people, if the wise heads at the head of affairs will allow it, can be the plea of their self defence. Can it be that Sir John A. McDonald [sic]<sup>3</sup> and Cartier<sup>4</sup> were aware that there were about 14000 of a population here who would justly consider it their right to be at least acquainted with the steps the new government

<sup>1</sup> It is not certain whether the Preface was written after the Journal had been begun, or before.

<sup>2</sup> The form frequently used by Begg, who was a Quebecker.

<sup>3</sup> The Right Honourable Sir John Alexander Macdonald, 1815-1891, Prime Minister and Minister of Justice in 1869.

<sup>4</sup> The Honourable Sir George Etienne Cartier, 1814-1873, Minister of Militia in 1869.



proposed taking with regard to their future welfare and that they in the face of this knowledge have insisted upon throwing in their deputies on the pretext that "We have bought your country—we have paid so much money for it—we expect to spend so much more on improvements—we of course did not exactly buy you as a people—but unfortunately for you, you happened to be born there and therefore you must just grin and bear with what we intend to do". The action of the Canadien government looks like this—that it is really this it is hard to believe—one has to fall back on the old plea "ignorance".

There is reason to suppose in the minds of Canadiens and those conversant with Canadien policy that the measures of the new government will be for the benefit of the settlers but how is a people to be convinced who have never had proper means of becoming acquainted with Canada and its people that these measures are to be beneficial to them when as yet they have never had any authoritative assurance of the same. We are at this present day utterly ignorant of what is proposed for us. By some we are told that we are not to have a voice at all in the new order of things—others say our representation at the council board of our country is to be very limited—others that we are to be taxed in equal proportions to the people of Ontario and Quebec—others that our taxes are to be light and so on dame rumor has full sway for she has it all her own way—nothing official has transpired to enlighten us—everywhere is conjecture and conjecture is the worst thing to be abroad in a country like this. In the presence of this utter ignorance can the free thinking—free speaking and free acting Canadiens condemn this people for feeling that they have been slighted and forgotten and can you blame them if their conjectures are apt to take the darkest form—and that they consider that the freedom they have so long enjoyed is to be taken from them—were Canadiens to see a species of serfdom before them would they not kick against it?

Here is where the government at Ottawa has made the grand mistake of its new undertaking—why if it was known that the settlement contains the population it does—did not Canada feel its way before taking such a long stride as it has done. Would it not have been wiser policy to have sent up authorized Agents to this country as soon as the transfer of the Territory was agreed upon for the purpose of feeling the pulse of the settlers finding out their ideas on the change proposed and opening out as far as possible the views of the Canadien government towards them—this at all events could not have done harm and it would very likely have

prevented the rupture that has now taken place. The views of the settlers could have been obtained by the Ottawa officials and measures to meet these views could have been taken, unless indeed the wise ones really intended all along to ignore the fact of there being any people here to consult. The settlers too on the other hand would have been prepared for the change proposed for them and instead of a barrier to prevent Mr. McDougall<sup>1</sup> from coming to Fort Garry, crowds would have gone forth to welcome him. Now here is a short retrospect as follows of late events that have tended to raise and foster the feelings of discontent now prevalent in the settlement.

For the last three or four years sundry attempts have been made to get up public meetings here for the purpose of raising sympathy in favor of annexation to Canada as it was called and at the same time to throw discredit on the Hudson Bay Company rule.<sup>2</sup> These meetings as they actually took place here were miserable failures—the men engaged in getting them up were unauthorized in their attempts at least as far as was known in the settlement—the consequence was that annexation to Canada became a bye word of ridicule—the meetings held were scenes of uproarious merriment instead of orderly gatherings for the public weal. But how were these ebullitions of a few reported abroad? Why [,] as large and influential meetings held—important resolutions adopted and so forth—intended to lead the public of Canada and the rest of the world to suppose that we were a people tyrannized over and that we were eagerly seeking for a milder and more generous government to step in and free us from our thralldom. Now such was never the case whatever may have been the faults of the Hudson Bay rule they were light ones and although there was a feeling in the minds of the settlers that the H.B.C. were not powerful enough to enforce the laws when required yet there never was a general feeling of discontent towards them or their actions in the government of the settlement. On the contrary we felt ourselves a free people in every respect we had privileges that in other countries were not enjoyed by the people. Our government was by a

<sup>1</sup> The Honourable William McDougall, 1822–1905, Minister of Public Works in the Dominion cabinet, 1867–1869; appointed Lieutenant-Governor of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories, September 28, 1869; ordered by National Committee of the *métis* not to enter Rupert's Land without special permission, October 30, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> See *Nor'Wester*, November 17, 1862; J. J. Hargrave, *Red River* (Montreal, 1871), pp. 254–255 and p. 423.

James  
Stewart<sup>1</sup>

council appointed from amongst ourselves[.] It is true we had no direct vote in their election but the H.B.C. invariably consulted the opinions of a neighbourhood before choosing a councilman from that part [:] we therefore to a certain degree had a voice in our own government and were content therewith. Our laws as administered savored more of arbitration than law and in that respect suited our requirements better than if a pack of lawyers had been amongst us urging with all the quibbles best known to them to eat each other up in useless suits. While speaking of law it may be well here to mention that in the history of the past few years of this settlement, it is found that our jail has been twice broken open and prisoners liberated. The first a clergyman condemned by 12 of his fellow settlers for a crime unmentionable here<sup>2</sup>—the second for resisting the officers of the law and liberated by whom? a small party who in justice to the law abiding people of this settlement be it said have not to this day recovered from the stigma the act of jail-breaking has cast on their characters.<sup>3</sup> And who were those engaged in the above acts? Principally Canadiens—who have railed most against the existing laws of our settlement and tried to set them at defiance—but Canadiens.<sup>4</sup> Can one wonder then that they were generally looked on with suspicions for a time here—be it known now however that although for a time the feeling was “Can anything good come out of Canada”?—since the advent of better men from there—since truer specimens of what Canadiens generally are have visited this settlement the reaction is altogether in their favor and the feeling now is that it is not fair to judge the whole flock from there being one or two black sheep in it. We now come to another

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note not in Begg's hand.

<sup>2</sup> The liberation of the Reverend G. O. Corbett, convicted of attempted abortion on a maid-servant and sentenced to six months imprisonment in 1863, by a party headed by James Stewart of St. James. Stewart was imprisoned and in turn liberated by a party headed by William Hallett and John Bourke. The liberators believed that Corbett was the victim of persecution by the Hudson's Bay Company (*Nor'Wester*, April 27, 1863; Hargrave, *Red River*, pp. 285-287).

<sup>3</sup> The liberation of Dr. (later Sir) John Christian Schultz, 1840-1896, Senator and Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba; leader of the “Canadian party”, imprisoned for debt, in 1868 (Hargrave, *Red River*, pp. 425-428). The numbers of the *Nor'Wester* for this date have not survived, but see Hargrave, *Red River*, Appendix G.

<sup>4</sup> The statement is too sweeping. James Stewart was an Orkney man formerly in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company, and William Hallett and James Bourke were Red River half-breeds. While it is true that Canadians such as Schultz led the agitation against the continuation of the Company's *régime*, there was a not inconsiderable native opposition to the Company also.



epoch in the tide of events that did much towards causing the present troubles.

Our settlement was suddenly devastated by means of a plague in the shape of the grasshoppers [;] it is needless here to give the oft repeated tale of how our crops were utterly destroyed last year. How the buffalo disappeared—the fish failed[,] in fact how utterly we were besieged by famine. England came to our aid—the United States assisted us—private contributions from Canada flowed in upon us. The Hudson Bay Company did more than all the others put together.<sup>1</sup> At this time the government at Ottawa no doubt for praiseworthy reasons sent in a party to commence the road to the Lake of the Woods the idea being to pay for their labor in provisions those from amongst the settlers who were willing to work.<sup>2</sup> The Ontario government voted \$5000 towards the relief of the settlement but John Sanfield McDonald [sic] could not see it in the same light and Ontario is that much richer to-day for we never received the money.<sup>3</sup> It will be well however to allow the appropriation to stand good as it is likely to be required next year to assist in feeding those emigrants from Canada who may be hardy enough to settle in Red River next summer there being every reason to look forward to the grasshopper calamity then and there is not more than enough in the country to feed the people already here for one year without crops. The two parties sent in charge of this end of the government road may have acted wisely but not too well. They employed a certain number of men from amongst the settlers and when flour was selling at £3 per barrel in the stores they charged their employees £3.12s and £4 per barrel and at the same time they paid their men only £3 per month in that ratio for their work.<sup>4</sup> This created dissatisfaction—the next thing which caused still

<sup>1</sup> Hargrave, like Begg an eyewitness and participant, gives a corroborative account (*Red River*, pp. 446–449).

<sup>2</sup> Snow's instructions were not found, but his reports to McDougall in P.A.C., Department of Public Works 9, 429, October 26, 1868 and November 9, 1868, detail how he offered work to those having to seek relief.

<sup>3</sup> A notation to this effect is in the Minutes of the Executive Relief Committee, June 2, 1869, P.A.M.; the Public Accounts of Ontario show the \$5,000 voted for Red River Relief unexpended on September 30, 1869 (*Ontario: Sessional Papers, II, 1870*, No. 2, p. 32). As the Minutes of the Relief Committee witness, however, the private subscriptions in Ontario were prompt and generous.

<sup>4</sup> The Canadian road party was led by John A. Snow, Superintendent, with Charles Mair, author of *Dreamland and Other Poems* and a protégé of McDougall's, as Paymaster. They reached Red River on September 26, 1868. The prices and wages quoted are repeated in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba* (Toronto, 1871), p. 17. These

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more discontent amongst the people was a concerted plan of a few in which the government official in charge of the road was implicated—to buy up from Indians (who had no right to sell) parcels of land on part of which people were actually living in and around Oak Point the head quarters of the government works. This raised such a feeling of indignation against the parties concerned that the head men in charge of the road summarily received notice from the neighbours around to quit the premises forthwith—and afterwards one of the principal actors in the affair (a government official) was fined by our petty court ten pounds Sterling for giving liquor to these same Indians.<sup>1</sup> These and similar actions on the part of the government employees whilst making them unpopular seriously injured the cause of Canada in the minds of the people here. And matters were not afterwards improved by the doings and writings of that celebrated!! poet Mr. Chas. Mair—who after having received the hospitalities of many families in the settlement saw fit to ridicule in public print those who had entertained him to speak and write

figures are accurate as to wages for the first months of work on the road ; but the rate paid was 2s. 9d. a day, *with board*, so Snow reported in 1870 : C.S.P., 1870 (12), "North-West Territory :—Papers relative to recent occurrences in the Territory," etc., Snow to Minister of Public Works, February 21, 1870. Snow reported in May, 1869, that an average of eighteen dollars a month had been paid to labourers, largely in provisions but partly in cash. *Ibid.*, Snow to McDougall, May 4, 1869. In August of the same year he reported that he had to pay ordinary labourers twenty dollars a month : *ibid.*, Snow to McDougall, August 2, 1869. The fact was that wages were high in Red River, and Snow had to meet the prevailing rates if the work was to proceed, but was reluctant to pay wages higher than those paid on the Thunder Bay section. Despite the increase reported, some Canadian and American labourers struck for payment of travelling expenses early in August. No half-breed did ; but no doubt they were infected by the discontent of their fellow workers.

The high price for flour charged by Snow is probably to be explained by the fact that it was bought and freighted very late in the season of 1868 in competition with the purchases of the Relief Committee (*ibid.*, Snow to McDougall, November 9, 1868). The value of flour stored at Oak Point in November, 1869, however, was given as approximately \$13.12, and \$12.62 a barrel (*ibid.*, Snow, February 14, 1870). That, however, probably reflects a fall in price in 1869.

If there was some reason for discontent amongst the local workers employed, it was undoubtedly increased by the fact that the wages paid in provisions were made payable on the store Dr. Schultz had opened at Oak Point.

<sup>1</sup> John A. Snow was the government official ; the petty court the Upper District Court ; £10 the usual fine for the offence. As the records of the Upper District Court have not survived, there is no official evidence of this usually accepted statement. Snow, in his official correspondence, says nothing. Contemporary references, however, do not leave the facts in doubt.

disparagingly of the settlers as a body and the ladies in particular.<sup>1</sup> These one may say are minor matters but they are pointed out to show the gradual feeling those actions of a few individuals caused of dislike to the government who would send such men as samples of their employees.

On the top of all those unfortunate occurrences in came Col. Dennis with his party of surveyors to divide and subdivide the land into sections as they saw fit—this at all events was premature on the part of the rulers at Ottawa before any arrangements had been made with the people here regarding the incoming government.<sup>2</sup> And although Col. Dennis acted in a gentlemanly and proper manner in the discharge of his troublesome duties still the people looked on the act of his party going to work before the establishment of the new order of rule as arbitrary and presumptuous. It can readily be believed however that if the minds of the settlers had not been prejudiced beforehand by the previous acts of government officials there would have been no interruption offered to the Col. and his party in their surveying operations—for everywhere Col. Dennis was received favorably by the majority of the settlement although he too fell into the trap of his predecessors and (if the expression may be used) was “gobbled” up by the men who all along have been the principal cause of trouble in the settlement.<sup>3</sup> As if everything was fated to be to the disadvantage of Canadien interests, a clique of men unpopular through their own deeds in this settlement have all along taken up the cudgels (it may be remarked) for Canadien annexation—these men have professed themselves as authority on all subjects concerning the new government and have invariably endeavoured to throw discredit on the Hudson Bay Company abroad and at home. Now the fact is the Hudson Bay Company have been misrepresented—they are not nor have they for the past twenty years been unpopular to the majority of the settlement, indeed they have been the best friend of the settler many of whom have reason to feel grateful to our “Grandmother” as the Company has been called by those desirous of being facetious on the subject. The Canadien government too will do well to not throw aside the advice and assistance the H.B.C. will surely have in its power to give—that is if it wishes to become popular as a government with the present

<sup>1</sup> See No. 1 below.

<sup>2</sup> John Stoughton Dennis, 1820–1885, land surveyor and colonel of militia. Dennis reached Red River on August 20, 1869 (C.S.P., 1870 (12), Dennis to McDougall, August 21, 1869).

<sup>3</sup> That is, Dennis, like Snow and Mair, entered the Settlement in the company of Dr. Schultz, and accepted his hospitality.



inhabitants of Red River. It will be well for the public in Canada & elsewhere to beware of reports touching the injustice of the H.B.C. to the people here as such is not the general feeling of the settlement—the prestige of the men however who have figured so far in connection with the Canadian government here has tended to make it decidedly unpopular with the majority of the settlement.

It may be said however that an intelligent people should not have been led into error by a class of men such as has been described who could not have been vested with any real authority—but it must be remembered there was no other authority to consult—even at this day no official notice has been received in any way either by the people here or their council of the proposed actions of Mr. McDougall and his confrères—and in the face of that the settlers here could only judge from the government men they had come in contact with and certainly the specimens produced so far in this case have not redounded to the credit of Canada. Besides it is known that the clique here with whom these very employees from Ottawa fraternized were in communication personally at times and otherwise with the chief men at the seat of government indeed so much so that they endeavoured to make capital out of the same here<sup>1</sup>—was it not then natural to suppose that the views of the Canadian officials at head quarters were impregnated with those of a certain one sided, self interested party here one too obnoxious in the extreme to the majority of the settlement. It would be impossible to give a complete list of the events that led to the present troubles the task would be too great.

Our community has been cursed instead of blessed through the medium of the press as it has been conducted in this settlement for some time past. The “*Nor Wester*”<sup>2</sup> a one sided, unpopular, mismanaged

<sup>1</sup> The clique was the Canadian party led by Dr. Schultz ; their mail, of course, passed through the hands of the Postmaster, A. G. B. Bannatyne, Begg's partner, and his assistants, and addresses would be noted. Schultz is elsewhere alleged to have boasted that he would be sheriff when the Canadian government came in (A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 24, 1869).

<sup>2</sup> The *Nor' Wester*, the only newspaper in the Settlement before 1870, was established in 1859 by William Buckingham and William Coldwell. In 1860 James Ross purchased Buckingham's interest. In 1864 Ross sold his share to Schultz, and in 1865 Coldwell too sold out. In 1868 Schultz turned the paper over to his friend and partner, W. R. Bown. The *Nor' Wester* was founded to advocate the settlement of the North West ; hence it always tended to be critical of the Hudson's Bay Company. In the hands of Schultz and Bown, it became outspokenly so.

sheet in the interests of the clique already referred to—it has endeavoured to mislead the minds of the people abroad regarding the true state of affairs in the settlement—it has maligned the Hudson Bay Coy by asserting statements of tyrannous actions on their part—actions that never took place except in the brain of the editor—it has uttered the falsehood that the people of Red River have been groaning under the yoke of oppression when in fact we have been all along blessed with the greatest of freedom—it has endeavoured to show a party inimical to Canadien interests when such a party never existed. In truth one can hardly wonder at Canadiens having such an erroneous opinion of this country and its people as they seem to have when a great deal of their information has been gleaned from such a source as the “Nor Wester”. That paper has continually railed against monopoly in this country—the greatest monopoly has been itself. We are however to have another newspaper<sup>1</sup> which will at least be a check on such a tissue of falsehoods as the “Nor Wester” has been in the custom of “uttering”. Here is a comicality in newspaper *Printing*<sup>2</sup> experience which at least evinces a littleness unworthy of honest Journalists. The Nor Wester hearing that the proposed Newspaper was to be called the “North Star” coolly informed its readers that it (the Nor Wester) had succeeded in blowing the clouds from the horizon to allow the North Star to shine forth (the present aspect of affairs in the settlement looks like a clear sky) and when afterwards it learned that the name of its rival was to be the “Pioneer” instead of the North Star what does it do but christen itself the “Nor Wester and Pioneer” impudent piracy at all events. When feeling was rife we had a visit from Hon. Jos. Howe<sup>3</sup> and on his arrival the first act of the clique already mentioned was to invite him to become a guest in the house of one of them who has made himself singularly conspicuous in Canadien affairs here.<sup>4</sup> The old politician however was too wary to be caught with such chaff—and declined the invitation. Fatigued by his hard trip over the plains, Mr. Howe kept a good deal in his quarters at the hotel. He however made a

<sup>1</sup> The *Red River Pioneer* which James Ross and William Coldwell were planning to establish in 1869; the first number was partly printed when the press was seized by the National Committee of the *métis*.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note on the manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> The Honourable Joseph Howe, 1804–1873, then President of the Council (on November 16, 1869, to become Secretary of State for the Provinces) in the Canadian cabinet. Howe’s visit was a private tour of inspection; he arrived in Red River on October 9 (P.A.C., Cowan Diaries, October 9, 1869).

<sup>4</sup> Dr. Schultz.

couple of trips up and down the Red and Assiniboine Rivers seeing enough it is certain to satisfy himself what the country was like—had he come earlier in the season he would have seen the settlement to much better advantage than he did as everything while he was here looked bleak and miserable preparatory to the change from Autumn to winter. Many of the principal settlers visited the Hon. gentleman and the universal opinion formed of him was that he was a fine old gentleman one who could see and act for himself. A great deal of satisfaction was felt throughout the settlement at Mr. Howe's visit although it was understood that he merely visited us in the capacity of a private individual irrespective of his public character. This will go to show how much good might have been done had delegates been sent to prepare the way for Mr. McDougall's coming. Although Mr. Howe never favoured us with a speech nor in any way made a public demonstration nor would he receive anything of the latter from us it is pretty certain that he left the settlement with a correct idea of the people and the situation of affairs as they then stood. It may be said indeed that he did much in his short visit here to counteract the evil influence that was abroad but I am sorry to say the seeds of discontent had been too deeply sown to be rooted up so easily and after his departure the crisis came.

The feelings of the people then broke out in a manner too plain to be mistaken. One portion of the settlers (the French) avowed their intention of preventing Mr. McDougall from entering the settlement and in support of this determination they erected barriers across the roads leading to Fort Garry—scouts were posted all along from the Assiniboine to Pembina a distance of over 60 miles to give notice of Mr. McDougall's approach—the number of men under arms at one time must have been upwards of six hundred and this large number was not assembled merely for the purpose of turning back one man and his few friends but it was done to show the universal opinion of the French Halfbreeds regarding the question at issue. Many of the French did not take part in this armed formation but offered their services as soon as they should be required. The English speaking portion of the settlement in the meantime quietly remained in the background nor were attempts to raise them against the French and in favor of McDougall found successful. They had no interest in opposing their neighbours with whom they had lived so long in amity especially in support of a cause that intended apparently to reduce their rights as British subjects to nothing and in fact when the thing was canvassed which was done by the friends of Mr.



McDougall there could not be found 50 men amongst the settlers themselves to offer their assistance in bringing the new governor as far as Fort Garry. Several ideas were afloat as to the propriety of keeping Mr. McDougall out but the general opinion seemed to be we have not been justly dealt by and we will not at all events oppose those who are fighting our battles to bring in a government that has as yet given us no assurance nor sample of their fair dealing—the universal cry was—we have been overlooked in this matter and if Mr. McDougall should come in and attempt to force on us measures distasteful to us we will then join in open resistance against him.

The council of Red River<sup>1</sup> in the meantime had several meetings and their ultimate decision and advice to Mr. McDougall and which was forwarded to him in the shape of a letter from the council—was that it would be better for him in the existing state of the country for his own peace and safety and for the public welfare to remain at Pembina and not endeavour to force himself into the settlement especially as it was found that there were so few favorably inclined towards him.<sup>2</sup>

On Mr. McDougall's arrival in Pembina he accepted the situation and decided on remaining there for the present but Messrs. Provencher and Cameron<sup>3</sup> thought to press through to Fort Garry. It was a useless attempt on their part as they were stopped within nine miles of the fort and escorted back to Pembina by an escort of 25 or 30 men armed. Provencher spent a number of hours amongst the rebels as they are called by the "Nor Wester" and if report speaks true he had no reason to cavil at their treatment of him. Cameron however had no opportunity to parley with them but was immediately turned back the way he came. The escort of Messrs. Provencher and Cameron had orders to see Mr. McDougall and his party across the lines and at the present our would be governor is quietly resting on his oars in Uncle Sam's dominion. Whether he intends to direct his course back to Canada or await the coming events at Pembina no one here can tell. The French settlers declare their intention to support the laws of the country as we have been accustomed

<sup>1</sup> The Council of the District of Assiniboia.

<sup>2</sup> This letter, signed by Governor Mactavish, is to be found in E. H. Oliver, *The Canadian North-West*, II (Ottawa, 1914), pp. 884-887; also C.S.P., 1870 (12).

<sup>3</sup> J. A. N. Provencher, 1843-1887, a nephew of the first Bishop of St. Boniface, a member of the staff of *La Minerve* and Secretary of the Council of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories to be formed at the date of the transfer.

Captain D. R. Cameron, R.A., a son-in-law of the Honourable Charles Tupper, and a member of the Council; to be in charge of military and police.

to until arrangements are made one way or another for the future and for that purpose there are armed night patrols of from 15 to 20 men on guard in the Town of Winnipeg to prevent fire or pillage on the part of any adventurers that may be amongst us. Fort Garry is guarded day and night by a force of from 60 to 120 men. The other half of the people are satisfied to remain quiet in the meantime so long as there appears no desire on the part of the French to lord it over them. Some idea may be formed of the earnestness of these French people when it is stated that at this moment some of them have been eighteen days on guard—sleeping at night on the snow with no tents or other covering except their ordinary clothes and this without the least prospect of pay—the food they eat is the only thing they get and that is furnished them by the more wealthy of their own people. Latterly the H.B.C. has been called upon to furnish the provisions but the company have been promised payment for the same by the leaders of the movement. All this time our respected Governor Wm. MacTavish<sup>1</sup> has been lying sick at death's door and this movement amongst the settlers has greatly increased the severity of his malady. It having been reported that the Canadian government had the intention of running in guns into [sic] the settlement all Freight carts were stopped and searched at the barriers and in some cases arms for and belonging to private individuals were taken from the carts and retained by the French.<sup>2</sup> A large quantity of private property belonging to Mr. McDougall and his party were [sic] seized and retained in safe keeping in the same manner. The mails also were stopped and the bags taken and locked up in a room in the church at La Rivière Salle<sup>3</sup> but on the same being protested against by the authorities and through the endeavours of the postmaster, Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne,<sup>4</sup> the mail bags were delivered over after a short detention without their having been opened or tampered with in the least. Col. Dennis who went to meet

<sup>1</sup> William Mactavish, 1815–1870, Governor of Assiniboa, 1858–1870, of Rupert's Land, 1864–1870.

<sup>2</sup> The Canadian government had despatched three hundred and fifty Enfield rifles with McDougall which, however, he had stored at Fort Abercrombie in Dakota Territory as a precaution.

<sup>3</sup> La Rivière Sale, on which St. Norbert is situated.

<sup>4</sup> A. G. B. Bannatyne, 1829–1889, born in the Orkneys, entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1846; came to Red River in 1849; retired from the service, married a daughter of Andrew McDermot and went into business in Red River, 1851; made magistrate, 1861, Postmaster 1862, and Councillor of Assiniboa, 1868.

Winnipeg



TOWN OF WINNIPEG.

This picture is from the *Canadian Illustrated News*, December, 1869, p. 141. Dr. Schultz's store and the "Canada" flag are prominent.





Mr. McDougall at Pembina received notice that he would not be permitted to return to the settlement in the meantime and Mr. Wm. Hallett<sup>1</sup> whom he had taken with him as a guide was tied and taken prisoner back to La Rivière Salle where he was held in custody for a while and then released. Parties going out and coming in are stopped and examined at the barriers and passes to leave the settlement are granted to those who wish to do so on whom no suspicion rests. With these exceptions (these) [sic] no outrage has been committed and certainly the whole movement has evinced good management. The general voice of the settlement is for proper representation and no foreign councilmen and the feeling is to have proper rights in the new government for the present residents of Red River. The priests of the Roman Catholic church have taken an active part in the movement and by many the absence of Bishop Taché at Rome is regretted it being feared that the French may exceed the bounds of right and that the priests who have so far encouraged them will not be able to restrain them.<sup>2</sup>

The Indians so far have not been mixed up in the affair and it is to be hoped their interference will not be called in by either side. One thing is certain it will be useless as well as unwise for the Canadien government to attempt to coerce by force the settlers into accepting councilmen from abroad. They are determined to have a full voice in the local government of their country[.] It will be far better for Canada to accede [sic] to this—pour in emigration and as the number of Canadien settlers will increase so will Canadien influence be in the ascendant. It is to be hoped the French will not be led away by excitement and ultimately overreach themselves. A collision between the French and English settlers is to be dreaded as no one can tell where that would end. The names of the two principal leaders of the French party are John Bruce<sup>3</sup> elected President and Louis Riel<sup>4</sup> Secretary. On the 6th November 1869 the following was issued by the French—

<sup>1</sup> See note 2 on p. 154. William Hallett, 1824–?, described by Charles Mair as a leader of the “English Plains Hunt” (Q.U.L., Mair Papers, Mair to E. H. Macklin, November 25, 1922), was employed in 1869 as guide and interpreter for one of Dennis’s survey parties, and when the troubles began served Dennis as guide in evading the patrols of the *métis* between Fort Garry and Pembina. He was arrested at Pembina Post on November 1.

<sup>2</sup> For comment on this passage, see Introduction.

<sup>3</sup> John Bruce, 1831–?, *métis* of St. Norbert, carpenter and legal practitioner.

<sup>4</sup> Louis Riel, 1844–1885, *métis* of St. Vital. See Introduction.

## Public Notice to the Inhabitants of Rupert[']s Land

The President and Representatives of the French-speaking population of Rupert's Land in Council (the Invaders of our rights being now expelled) already aware of your sympathy do extend the hand of friendship to you our friendly fellow Inhabitants and in doing so invite you to send twelve Representatives from the following places, viz.

St. Johns 1. St. Margrets [sic] 1. Headingly 1. St. James 1. St. Mary's 1. Kildonan 1. St. Paul's 1. St. Andrew's 1. St. Clements 1. St. Peter's 1. Town of Winnipeg 2. in order to form one body with the above Council consisting of twelve members to consider the present political state of this Country and to adopt such measures as may be deemed best for the future welfare of the same. A meeting of the above council will be held in the Court House at Fort Garry on Tuesday the 16th day of November at which the invited Representatives will attend.

By order of the President,

LOUIS RIEL,

SECRETARY<sup>1</sup>

Winnipeg Nov. 6th 1869

The above notice was taken by a deputation from the French to Dr. Bown<sup>2</sup> the editor of the "Nor Wester" and he was requested to print off a certain number of copies. He replied that he would have to consult his friends first which he immediately left to do and on his return he refused to print the desired copies. Those in charge of the written notice then took Dr. Bown and kept him in close custody in one of the rooms of his printing house with two men to guard him. They then took possession of his press & type and calling in the aid of two experienced hands they succeeded in printing off a number of copies. Mr. James Ross<sup>3</sup> one of the proprietors of the "Red River Pioneer" newspaper standing by to overlook the work that it was done correctly. It is to

<sup>1</sup> Begg's text is an accurate copy of a printed version in the Public Archives of Manitoba.

<sup>2</sup> Walter R. Bown, son of Dr. J. Y. Bown, M.P. for North Brant, 1861-1873. Bown came to Red River in 1863 and practised as a dentist. He became a friend of Schultz and his partner in the free trade; and in 1868 proprietor of the *Nor' Wester*. R. P. Meade was editor in 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 on page 159. Half-breed son of Alexander Ross, historian and Sheriff of Assiniboia. James was born in Red River in 1835; educated at St. John's College and the University of Toronto; journalist and lawyer; Sheriff and Postmaster of Assiniboia, 1860-1862; returned to Canada in 1864; to Red River in 1869; died 1871.



be regretted that the American officials<sup>1</sup> at Pembina have interfered in this matter in which they could have no other object than in misleading the French settlers here on many points. Their attempts however have been frustrated here so far and happily so as some of the measures proposed by one Enios [sic] Stutsman<sup>2</sup> was [sic] diabolical in the extreme and unmentionable here. The American residents in Red River with their consul as far as can be learned have kept their hands clean from this movement amongst our settlers.

*Tuesday, 16th November, 1869<sup>3</sup>*

To-day about noon the delegates as per appointment met in the Court House to discuss matters regarding the present and future welfare of the settlement. There were about 150 armed men around the door to usher the delegates into the council room and as they entered the building they fired off a "feu de joie" to welcome those from the English side of the settlement at the same time a salute of 24 guns were fired from the Fort by the French.

The members of the council from the English speaking side were as follows

Henry McKenney	}	Town of Winnipeg
H. F. O'Lone		
James Ross		Kildonan
Maurice Lowman	}	(substitute for John Inkster who was elected but unable to attend)
		St. Johns
Dr. Bird		St. Pauls
Donald Gunn		St. Andrews
Thos. Bunn		St. Clements
Henry Prince (Indian chief of the Sotos)		St. Peters
Robert Tait		St. James
Wm. Tait		Headingly

<sup>1</sup> These were Charles T. Cavilier, Postmaster, Joseph Rolette, Jr., Customs official, and Joseph Lemay, Ex-Customs official, leaders of the Dakota *métis* who hoped the troubles would lead to annexation to the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Enos Stutsman, 1826-1874, lawyer and land speculator of Pembina, Dakota Territory, and member of the Territorial Legislature, 1862-1866, and 1867-1873, an active annexationist but possibly more interested in causing trouble in order to have a military post re-established at Pembina to benefit his land speculations.

<sup>3</sup> The beginning of the *Journal* proper.

# 166 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

Geo. Gunn	St. Anns
John Garrioch	Portage La Prairie <sup>1</sup>
Those from the French side were	
Francois Dauphinie	} For the Parish of St. Francois Xavier
Pierre Poitras	
Patrice Breland	
Pierre Laviellier	
Wm. O'Donoghue	St. Boniface
André Beaucheman	} St. Vital
Pierre Paranteau Senr.	
Louis La Certe	} St. Norbert
Baptiste Touron	
Charles Nolin	} St. Anns <sup>2</sup>
Jean Baptiste Perrault	

<sup>1</sup> Henry McKenney, Canadian, half brother of John Schultz ; father-in-law of Charles Mair from September, 1869 ; Sheriff of Assiniboia, 1862-1870, merchant and lumberman.

Hugh F. O'Lone, American, with his brother, Bob O'Lone, proprietor of the Red Saloon.

James Ross, Scots half-breed. See note 2 on p. 164.

Maurice Lowman, presumably a son of Mrs. Lowman, schoolmistress and later Mrs. James Bird ; book-keeper in firm of Inkster and Boyd.

Dr. Curtis J. Bird, 1838-1876, English, born in Red River ; St. Paul's is better known as Middlechurch.

Donald Gunn, 1797-1878, Scot, naturalist and historian.

Thomas Bunn, English half-breed, Councillor of Assiniboia, son of Dr. John Bunn, magistrate and Councillor of Assiniboia.

Henry Prince, Saulteux, son of Peguis, chief of the Christian Saulteux and Swampies of St. Peter's Parish.

Robert Tait, 1830-1912, Scots farmer, freighter and miller.

William Auld Tait, 1826-1900, Scots farmer, later member of Council of North-West Territories.

George Gunn, Scots half-breed. St. Ann's is better known as Poplar Point. As St. Margaret's (High Bluff) had been invited to send a delegate, the two parishes were evidently treated as one.

John Garrioch, 1813-1901, native of Orcadian descent ; teacher for Church Missionary Society at Portage la Prairie, and farmer.

<sup>2</sup> François Dauphinais, *circa* 1815-?, *métis* of St. François-Xavier, later vice-president of Provisional Government and member of Legislative Council of Manitoba.

Pierre Poitras, *circa* 1811-?, *métis* of St. François-Xavier, son of André Poitras, who was settled at White Horse Plain in 1814.

Patrice Breland, 1837-?, *métis* of St. François-Xavier, son of Pascal Breland, Councillor of Assiniboia, included in error ; not repeated in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*.

At the opening of the council Mr. Hargrave<sup>1</sup> secretary to Gov. MacTavish presented a letter to Mr. H. McKenney from the governor to be read to the meeting by that gentleman or Mr. Hargrave. The French delegates however opposed the reading of the letter while the English insisted on its being read—a compromise however was effected and it was agreed by all parties that the document should be read towards the close of the meeting. A good deal of discussion ensued on different matters none of which however has so far been made public. The council at last adjourned to meet on the morrow—neither side having got any further than when they commenced. The whole time was spent in discussing the general aspect of affairs without any one proposition being proposed and agreed to—the council therefore separated pretty much as they met without understanding each other. Before the adjournment the following address was read aloud by Mr. H. McKenney—

WHEREAS I WILLIAM MACTAVISH Governor of Assiniboia have been informed that a meeting is to be held to-day of persons from the different Districts of the Settlement for the ostensible purpose of taking into consideration the present political condition of the Colony and for suggesting such measures as may appear to be best adapted for meeting the difficulties and dangers connected with the existing state of public affairs ;

AND WHEREAS I deem it advisable at this conjuncture to place before that meeting as well as before the whole body of the people what it appears to be

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Pierre Lèveillé, *circa* 1840–?, *métis* of St. François-Xavier.

W. B. O'Donoghue, Irish-American, came to St. Boniface in 1868 ; teacher at St. Boniface College and candidate for Holy Orders ; of Fenian and annexationist proclivities.

André Beauchemin, *circa* 1825–?, Canadian, born in Red River.

Pierre Parenteau, Sr., a Justice of the Peace of St. Norbert.

Baptiste Tourond, *circa* 1840–?, *métis* of St. Norbert.

Louis Lacerte, *circa* 1847–?, *métis* of St. Norbert.

Charles Nolin, *circa* 1836–1907, *métis* of Ste. Anne-des-Chênes.

Jean-Baptiste Morin, *dit* Perrault, 1825–?, Canadian, born in Red River ; of Ste. Anne-des-Chênes.

It is to be noted that none of the *métis* representatives was a member of the Council of Assiniboia, or a son of one. On the other hand, Dauphinais, Lèveillé, Parenteau, Tourond, Nolin and Perrault were men of influence among their people.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph James Hargrave, 1842–1894, son of James and Letitia Hargrave and nephew of Governor William Mactavish ; author of *Red River* (Montreal, 1871) ; in service of Hudson's Bay Company, 1861–1894 ; came to Red River in the former year.



necessary for me to declare in the interests of public order and of the safety and welfare of the settlement. THEREFORE I NOTIFY ALL WHOM IT CONCERNS THAT during the last few weeks large bodies of armed men have taken up positions on the public high road to Pembina and contrary to the remonstrances and protests of the public authorities have committed the following unlawful acts :

FIRST. They have forcibly obstructed the movements of various persons travelling on the public highway in the peaceable prosecution of their lawful business and have thus violated that personal liberty which is the undoubted right of all Her Majesty's subjects.

SECONDLY. They have unlawfully seized and detained on the road at La Rivière Salle in the Parish of St. Norbert goods and merchandise of various descriptions and of very considerable value belonging as well to persons coming into the Colony as to citizens already settled here and carrying on their business in the Settlement thereby causing great loss and inconvenience not only to the owners of those goods but as has formally been complained of also to the carriers of the same and possibly involving the whole Colony in a ruinous responsibility.

THIRDLY. THEY have unlawfully interfered with the public mails both outgoing and incoming and by thus tampering with the established means of communication between the Settlement and the outside world have shaken public confidence in the security of the mails and given a shock to the trade and commerce of the Colony of which the mischievous effects cannot now be fully estimated.

FOURTHLY. Not only without permission but in the face of repeated remonstrances on the part of the Hudson Bay Company's officer in immediate charge of Fort Garry they have in numbers varying from about sixty to one hundred and twenty billeted themselves upon that Establishment under the plea of protecting it from a danger which they alleged was known by themselves to be imminent but of which they have never yet disclosed the particular nature—they have placed armed guards at the gates of an establishment which every stick and stone of it is private property—in spite of the most distinct protestations against such a disregard of the rights of property they have taken possession of rooms within the Fort—and although they have there as yet committed no direct act of violence to person or property beyond what has been enumerated yet by their presence in such numbers with arms for no legitimate purpose that can be assigned they have created a state of excitement and alarm within and around the Fort which seriously interferes with the regular business of the establishment.

FIFTHLY. A body of armed men have entered the Hudson Bay Company's Post at Pembina where certain Gentlemen from Canada with their families were peaceably living, and, under threats of violence have compelled them to

quit the establishment at a season of the year when the rigors of winter were at hand and forced them to retire within American Territory.

And in the last place they have avowed it as their intention in all those unlawful proceedings to resist arrangements for the transfer of the Government of this country which have been made under the sanction of the Imperial Parliament and thus virtually set at defiance the Royal Authority. Instead of adopting those lawful and constitutional means which under the enlightened rule of Her Most Gracious Majesty our Queen are sufficient for the ultimate attainment of every object that rests upon reason and justice the persons who have been engaged in committing those unlawful deeds have resorted to acts which directly tend to involve themselves in consequences of the gravest nature and to bring upon the Colony and the country at large the evils of anarchy and the horrors of war.

THEREFORE in the interests of law and order in behalf of all the securities you have for life and property and in a word for the sake of the present and the future welfare of the Settlement and its inhabitants—I again earnestly and emphatically Protest against each and all of these unlawful acts and intents—I charge those engaged in them before they are irretrievably and hopelessly involved immediately to disperse themselves and peaceably to depart to their habitations or to their lawful business under the pains and penalties of law and whatever in other respects may be the conclusions of those who meet to deliberate upon the present critical and distracted state of public affairs I adjure you as citizens having the interests of your country and your kindred at heart to ratify and proclaim with all the might of your united voices this public notice and protest and so avert from the country a succession of evils of which those who see the beginning may never see the end.

You are dealing with a crisis out of which may come incalculable good or immeasurable evil and with all the weight of my official authority and all the influence of my individual position let me finally charge you to adopt only such means as are lawful and constitutional rational and safe.

Given under my hand and seal at Fort Garry—this Sixteenth day of November, 1869.

W. MAC TAVISH

GOVERNOR OF ASSINIBOIA.<sup>1</sup>

One of the men on guard at Fort Garry attempted to desert but was caught in the act and condemned as a punishment to walk up and down a considerable time bearing a tin of water in each hand. The disgrace

<sup>1</sup> A printed text is given in C.S.P., 1870 (12). Except in punctuation and capitalization and a substitution of "Assiniboine" for "Assiniboia" in the printed text of C.S.P., Begg's copy and the former agree.

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of the punishment was meant to serve as a warning to deserters for the future and goes to show the discipline amongst the French in arms. Weather pleasant not too cold but clear.

*Wednesday, 17th November, 1869*

*Caldwell.*<sup>1</sup> Governor MacTavish last evening sent a copy of his "Proclamation to the Inhabitants of Red River" to the office of the "Red River Pioneer" with instructions to print and circulate a number of copies of the same amongst the people. This Mr. Colville<sup>2</sup> one of the proprietors of the "Pioneer" immediately set to work to do but before he was able to get off his proof sheet to-day the gentlemanly? and piratical editor of the "Nor Wester" had succeeded in purloining a copy of the document and issuing it in the form of an Extra. Unfortunately for Dr. Bown however the copy he had laid his hands upon was incomplete Fifthly being left out altogether and the Extra he sent out amongst the settlers showed plainly in itself that he had no authority to print it.

The remarks contained in the Extra that the Proclamation was drawn from the Governor is false and at the same time shows the spiteful and unworthy feelings of Dr. Bown. The address referred to as sent Governor MacTavish was signed by a number of respectable people principally Canadiens and sent but the Proclamation was not intended as a reply to it as the Governor had nearly completed that document ere he received the address in question. He (Governor MacTavish) replied in a suitable manner to the latter in a private letter which fact however Dr. Bown takes care to conceal although it was well known to him that such was the case. Below is a copy of the first part of the Extra—

### THE NOR WESTER AND PIONEER EXTRA

Winnipeg, Wednesday November 17th 1869

The Crisis

Loyalty Triumphant

The Governor's Proclamation

On the 12th inst. the following address was presented to Governor MacTavish [sic] signed by a large number of our most respectable inhabitants; and on the 17th a reply was issued which will be found below:

<sup>1</sup> Marginal correction on the manuscript.

<sup>2</sup> William Caldwell, journalist (see note 1 on page 159) brother-in-law of James Ross, and his partner in the *Nor'Wester* and the *Red River Pioneer*.



Town of Winnipeg,  
November 12th 1869<sup>1</sup>

To William McTavish Esq.

Governor Hudson's Bay Company Fort Garry.

We the undersigned residents of the Town of Winnipeg and loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain and Ireland

Beholding with great alarm the unsettled state of feeling existing in this Territory and the threatening position assumed by a portion of its French speaking population toward the Crown in the person of Her Majesty's representative the future Governor of this Territory and believing as we do that this disaffection or dissatisfaction is the result of various slanderous interpretations having been—from time to time—disseminated among the people by persons unknown

We do therefore now demand that you as the representative of Her Majesty in this Territory do proclaim among the people either by convening a public meeting for that purpose or posting in conspicuous places throughout the country a full and correct exposition of the nature of the transfer of this Territory to the Dominion of Canada.

We also request that you will explain so far as lies in your power the policy likely to be adopted by the Canadian authorities relative to the governing of the Territory.

Also ; that you deny the numerous libellous slanders which are in circulation regarding the purposes for which the Territory was acquired. That you warn them of the danger they are incurring to themselves by persistence in their present violent course thereby imperiling the future welfare of the country ; and that you do entreat them to lay down their arms, and return peaceably to their homes.

Here is the proclamation drawn from Governor McTavish on the present state of affairs.

Then follows an imperfect copy of the Proclamation Fifthly being entirely left out.<sup>2</sup>

Ten O'Clock was the hour appointed for the delegates to meet at the Court House—the English side were punctual but it was about noon before the French delegates made their appearance. The discussions of to-day greatly resembled those of yesterday with the exception that a more friendly feeling seemed to exist between the two sides of the council. It was near midnight before the delegates separated and they parted to meet again on Monday morning next without having as yet

<sup>1</sup> This address is printed without signatures in C.S.P., 1870 (12), p. 56. No copy of the extra has survived.

<sup>2</sup> As noted above, the Proclamation is printed in C.S.P., 1870 (12).

adopted any course of action. It is to be hoped however that on Monday some definite action will be taken.

Henry Prince the Indian chief this morning stated that he felt hurt in his feelings that they would not allow him to express his opinions in the council yesterday—he was undecided whether to attend to-day but ultimately attended—he was accompanied by his body guard of one from his tribe. He also said that he did not like the firing of guns yesterday that amongst his people it was customary to attend council without arms when peaceably inclined. His opinion of the council was that they were dilly dallying with each other for no purpose.<sup>1</sup>

Weather good but cold.

*Thursday, 18th November, 1869*

The General Quarterly Court sat to-day Judge Black presiding—H. McKenney Sheriff.<sup>2</sup>

The names of the constables were read out and answered to and then the court proceeded with the business of the day.

The principal case to-day was one for child murder against Flora Hope<sup>3</sup> which after occupying the most part of the day was decided in a verdict not of murder but of concealing child-birth and the punishment was six months in jail.

James Ross delegate for Kildonan is suspected of working in favor of the McDougall clique and against the interests of the settlers. The Proclamation of Governor McTavish was issued in fine form by the Pioneer to-day without any comments on the same by the printers.

Henry Cook<sup>4</sup> to-day denied his belief that Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne (and stated that he had only repeated the stories of others) had assisted the French by provisions and other means to resist Mr. McDougall and he further said that he never believed the same and had wheresoever the opportunity had occurred given the denial to the story. Mr. Bannatyne

<sup>1</sup> For the proceedings of the Convention, see No. VIII below.

<sup>2</sup> The General Quarterly Court of Assiniboia, the highest court of the District.

John Black, 1817–1879, entered the service of the Company at Red River in 1839 ; in 1849 he became a member of the Council of Assiniboia and in 1851 President of the Upper District Court. In 1852 he returned to the United Kingdom ; from there he went to Australia, where he served as Minister for Lands in New South Wales. In 1862 he returned to Assiniboia as Recorder, in which office he served until 1870.

<sup>3</sup> *Nor'Wester*, October 26, 1869.

<sup>4</sup> Henry Cook, presumably a son of William Henry Cook, member of Council of Assiniboia, 1822, and again in 1835 ; not otherwise identified.

has been accused by certain enemies of his of influencing the present movement of the French but no one has yet been able nor can they prove their assertions—malice is at the bottom of it and not truth.<sup>1</sup>

Weather cold—sleighing medium good.

*Friday, 19th November, 1869*

The General Quarterly Court was continued to-day and the principal case was Snow the government road master vs. his employees. Mr. Snow it appears refused to pay the men under him their correct wages on account of some strike they had previously made while working for him. The men also it appears complained that Snow had been making money out of them in furnishing their supplies. At last the men took the law in their own hands and seizing Mr. Snow they threatened to drown him—under this pressure Mr. Snow on the advice of one of his assistants Mr. Hamilton<sup>2</sup> agreed to pay them their wages. Immediately after however he had the ringleaders arrested and held for trial at this court. The men had a good case against Snow but it was badly managed by their counsel and two of the ringleaders were to-day condemned to pay a fine of £4 each with a recommendation to the mercy of the court.<sup>3</sup> Judge Black's mercy consisted in giving the culprits 30 days in which to pay the fine taking their counsel Combs<sup>4</sup> as security for the same. One of the two fined (a Mr. Scott)<sup>5</sup> stated before leaving court that it was a pity they had not ducked Snow when they were at it as they had not got their money's worth. The Court closed to-day.

The French people to-day seized two rifles and one shot gun from Major Wallace<sup>6</sup> who was about leaving the settlement the reason being that he could leave without arms but not with them.

Towards evening Mr. James Ross called on Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne

<sup>1</sup> Bannatyne's sympathy with the cause of the *métis*, however, was manifest and unconcealed.

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Hamilton, assistant surveyor in Snow's party.

<sup>3</sup> P.A.M., "Record of the General Quarterly Court of Assiniboia," November 18, 1869: The Queen vs W. I. Allan, Tho. Scott, Francis F. Moggridge, and George Fortney, for aggravated assault on Mr. John Snow. Begg's comment is interesting in view of the way this incident is used against Scott.

<sup>4</sup> Combs cannot be identified, but presumably was the J. M. Coombs captured with the Schultz party on December 7.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Scott, 1844[?]-1870, Canadian of Irish birth, a workman on the Snow road in the summer of 1869.

<sup>6</sup> Major James Wallace, of Whitby, Ontario, employed by Snow and Dennis in purchase of supplies, and sent into Settlement by McDougall to observe.



and invited him to spend the evening with him. Mr. Bannatyne accepted the invitation wondering what could have brought it about as he was not on visiting terms with Mr. Ross. What was his surprise on entering the house to find Dr. Shultz [sic] there to meet him. He sat down and both Ross & S[c]hultz tried to draw out from him his views on the present state of affairs. They were unsuccessful however. It was a mean shabby trick on the part of Ross and could only have been done to try and waylay Mr. Bannatyne into trouble. It goes to show that Mr. James Ross is in hand and glove with the McDougall S[c]hultz party irrespective of the claims of the settlers here—a two faced traitor. It is a pity that Mr. Colville<sup>1</sup> who is in partnership with him in the Pioneer Newspaper should be connected with him as Mr. Colville appears to be an honest fair dealing man.

The night patrols are still on guard in the town—the weather being very cold Mr. Bannatyne has allowed them the use of his kitchen and all the wood they want to burn to keep themselves from freezing when they are relieved from time to time during the night. A heavy snow storm to-day with a high driving wind.

Mail arrived from the States about noon to-day.

*Saturday, 20th November, 1869*

Major Wallace and party left early this morning for Canada. The Major is not it appears on good terms with Mr. McDougall and does not give that gentleman the best of characters.<sup>2</sup> It appears the Major was sent down to bring up Mr. McDougall and party but on meeting the would be governor he was put to driving a team and forced to eat at a separate table with the servants. This irritated the military gentleman and he & Mr. McDougall had words on the subject.

Thos. Bunn one of the delegates on the English side avowed his intentions openly to-day which were to stand up for the rights of the people which in a few words was a full and elective representation at the council board of the country. Maurice Lowman another delegate did the same thing as well as Mr. McKenney the representative for Winnipeg Town.

<sup>1</sup> William Coldwell.

<sup>2</sup> See the correspondence in the *New Nation*, April 15, 1870, where this observation is repeated by H. S. Donaldson and indignantly denied by Wallace, *ibid.*, June 3, 1870. Wallace, it seems, was a garrulous, shifty character, given to trouble-making. See Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 81-83.

A Mr. Horace Sewell seconded by Chas. Garrett<sup>1</sup> has been circulating stories to the effect that letters are being opened on transit to this place and that Mr. Bannatyne the postmaster is accessory to the fact—this is altogether false and these statements will be brought back to those who made them to prove them.

The offices at the Fort close to-day soon after dinner this rule being in force on every Saturday except when business there is very pressing.

Weather continues cold with half a foot of snow on the ground—they are not sleighing on the river yet.

Mail was sent off this evening for the States.

*Sunday, 21st November, 1869*

The weather to-day was bracing not too cold with a clear sky. The usual services took place in the evening the Archdeacon McLean<sup>2</sup> preached at Holy Trinity<sup>3</sup> a small chapel in the town. Dr. S[c]hultz some time ago about the time when it became known that the mission of Messrs. McDougall and Cartier in England<sup>4</sup> with regard to the transfer of this country was successful erected a flag staff on which he used to hoist the British flag with the words "Canada" inserted in the middle of it in white Letters. This flag staff was placed directly in front of Dr. S[c]hultz's drug store and on every Sunday on any special occasion or on the arrival of any government official the flag was regularly hoisted. At one time it was thought of by the French to go and cut the flag pole down—at another to take down the flag cut out the words Canada and sewing plain scarlet in its place take and hoist the proper British flag as it would then be—on the flag pole of Fort Garry. They were saved the trouble however as for the last two or three Sundays the flag has not been hoisted nor is it likely to be in the present state of affairs. The hoisting of the flag with the words Canada on it was uncalled for and premature on the part of Dr. S[c]hultz.

A number of clergymen and others met in company with Dr. S[c]hultz

<sup>1</sup> Horace Sewell cannot be identified. Charles Garrett was hotel-keeper, doctor, lawyer and character, as well as a clamorous opponent of the Hudson's Bay Company (A. Begg and Walter Nursey, *Ten Years in Winnipeg*, Winnipeg, 1879, p. 13).

<sup>2</sup> The Venerable John McLean, 1828–1886, who came to Red River in 1866 as Warden of St. John's College; later Bishop of Saskatchewan.

<sup>3</sup> Holy Trinity Church of the Church of England was begun as a mission in Winnipeg by Archdeacon McLean in 1868.

<sup>4</sup> The commissioners left for England in October, 1868; the negotiations were concluded in March, 1869; Schultz returned to Red River in May of that year.

this evening at the house of Mr. James Ross to discuss the political state of the country.

*Monday, 22nd November, 1869*

Col. Stutsman arrived this morning from Pembina. He brought accounts that the members of Mr. McDougall's party were anxious to return to Canada but Mr. McDougall would not let them on account of receiving entreaties from certain individuals on no account to leave Pembina at present.<sup>1</sup> His (Col. Stutsman's) description of the party is as follows.

Hon. Wm. McDougall—overbearing distant and unpleasant manner—he has made no friends in Pembina and keeps very much to himself, seems to feel vindictive towards the people of this country—and was heard to utter the threat that the French Half Breeds would rue the day when they turned him out of Pembina fort and that he would see the time when he would have his foot on their necks. Mr. Provencher appears to be a pleasant sort of a man who had come up altogether wrongly informed regarding this country, does not seem to be in Mr. McDougall's confidence. Mr. Richards ditto as Provencher—a more elderly man however does not appear to be extraordinarily [sic] clever on Law Subjects although appointed Attorney General for the North West.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Alexander Begg<sup>3</sup>—a sociable sort of man but does not seem experienced enough to hold the position of Head of the Customs department in the North West. He would not likely be a very harsh official in the discharge of his duties. Capt. Cameron a natural ass so report says and one no more fitted to be a member of the council than a real live donkey. He is surnamed the Captain of the "Horse Marines". Dr. Jacques<sup>4</sup> is an unmannerly young fellow and less liked in Pembina than any of the party.

<sup>1</sup> See the letter of John A. Snow to McDougall, November 9, 1869, urging him on no account to leave Pembina, in E. H. Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, II, p. 889.

<sup>2</sup> A. N. Richards, 1822–1897, lawyer and reformer; later Lieutenant-Governor of British Columbia. McDougall had accepted Provencher—and Cameron—with reluctance; in return he had been allowed to select Richards, whom Macdonald distrusted: P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to McDougall, November 27, 1869; Macdonald to Howland, February 3, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Not, of course, to be confused with the author of the *Journal*. This Alexander Begg came out with McDougall's party as Collector of Customs; after varied service in the North-West, he settled in British Columbia, where he wrote his *History of British Columbia* (Toronto, 1894).

<sup>4</sup> Dr. A. G. Jacques, or Jackes; later a leading doctor of Winnipeg.



Mr. Frank McDougall brother to the Hon. Gentleman is a rough specimen of no great account. The ladies are Miss McDougall and Mrs. Cameron<sup>1</sup> the former a mild gentle ladylike person, the latter sprightly and pretty and altogether [un?] fit for such a mop as Captain Cameron. The H.B. Company furnishes the party with money.

The St. Paul Press comes to hand to-day with a statement purporting to be from Mr. W. E. Sanford<sup>2</sup> who was lately here on a visit to the effect that the present movement amongst the French Half Breeds was not of much importance and that it had been greatly exaggerated nor indeed had it been successful but had dwindled down to a very farcical demonstration indeed. A posse of about a hundred halfbreeds (so Mr. Sanford says) started for the frontier to intercept the Governor but from desertions they soon only numbered about fifty. Finding that they had made asses of themselves these fifty men turned round and escorted the Governor with every mark of respect to the capital of his new dominion. Such a statement coming from Mr. Sanford who could not have been aware whether Mr. McDougall got through here or not is at once injudicious as well as untruthful. A Petition written by Dr. Schultz headed by Jas. Stewart<sup>3</sup> and a number of strangers in the settlement was handed round by Dr. Bown this morning for signature—the petition was addressed to the council of delegates and some of its contents were right enough but the fact of the document being gotten up and handed round by such men was enough to condemn it. The petition had as well as other things for its object the upsetting of Mr. McKenney and Mr. H. F. O'Lone in their responsibility as delegates. Mr. Bannatyne refused to sign it and afterwards addressed the following letter to the council explaining his reasons—

<sup>1</sup> Emma, wife of Captain Cameron and daughter of the Honourable Charles Tupper ; as Mrs. Cameron was expectant, it may be Dr. Jacques was in attendance. It has not been possible to discover Miss McDougall's christian name. W. B. McDougall, a son, was a member of the party. Frank McDougall has not been otherwise identified.

<sup>2</sup> W. E. Sanford, 1838-1899, of Hamilton, Ontario, head of W. E. Sanford Manufacturing Company ; with James Turner chiefly instrumental in beginning the commercial connection between Hamilton and Red River of which Begg was the agent ; later Senator, 1887-1899. The story referred to had been deliberately "planted" by Sanford to discourage a rush of American "bad men" to Red River : C.S.P., 1870 (12), Sanford to Howe, November 18, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See notes 2 and 3 on page 154. James Stewart had become chief clerk in Dr. Schultz's store, where he dispensed drugs as pharmaceutical apprentice. No copy of this petition has been found.

A Petition written apparently by Dr. Schultz signed principally by a number of Strangers and others in the settlement and headed by Jas. Stewart has just been brought me by Dr. Bown with a request I should sign it. I have refused to sign this document because those engaged in getting it up have been to a very great extent the cause of all our present troubles. The course they have adopted in their relations with the Canadien Government and its officials is well known to all here—and their connection with the latter has not been fruitful of good to the country.

The Petition has been written by one who has broken our laws headed by one who has broken our laws and handed me by one who has broken our laws. I could not consent to mix myself with such people and have on these grounds refused to sign it.

Reports have of late been industriously circulated reflecting both on my private & public character as Postmaster. It has been said I have assisted to raise the French Half Breeds to resist Mr. McDougall and assisted by providing provisions & otherwise to maintain the prevailing excitement among them.

The truth of these slanderous rumours I totally deny.

I coincide with the party of action so far as they endeavour to obtain their & our rights [;] that I ever advised or encouraged them in any way to take up arms or to perform any illegal act is false & the man who utters such statements is false too.

With regard to my character as Postmaster the statements made against me are groundless and any man who professes to have proof to the contrary should now come forward & produce it. I can solemnly swear that no letters have been tampered with, so far as my Post office is concerned & altho' the Mail Bags were detained a couple of times for an hour or two no man's letters were tampered with.

My earnest wish is that the Canadien Government should be established as early as possible, only let us have our elective and other acknowledged rights. I have tried for this from the first and will continue to do so.

My own desire is that the French portion of the settlement should now speak out their minds on what they deem justly due them in the new order of Government. This once obtained by the Settlement generally and found to be what every free people has a right to expect. My belief is that those who have as it were fought our battles (although perhaps in a different way than we would have done) will have the thanks hereafter of the people in the settlement & their posterity and that their wishes will be the wishes of the rest of the settlement and that all will combine in demanding our rights—the unassailable rights of a free people worthy of having a thorough & complete voice in the management of their own affairs.

[Signed] A. G. B. BANNATYNE

The above was enclosed with the following letter to H. McKenney and handed into the council of delegates to be read aloud—

Henry McKenney Esq.

Delegate for the Town of Winnipeg.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find a statement that I wish laid before the Committee at present sitting in the court House, for the purpose of being read before them and you will therefore oblige by presenting the same to the President.

I remain Dear Sir

Yours very obediently

Winnipeg 22nd November 1869

[Signed] A. G. B. BANNATYNE<sup>1</sup>

The petition from Jas. Stewart and others was not allowed to be read in the council from the fact that it ignored there being two delegates present to represent the views of the residents in the Town of Winnipeg—and therefore not in order. Mr. Bannatyne's letter through Mr. McKenney delegate is to be read to-morrow. A second petition is going the rounds started by D. A. Grant bookkeeper for Col. Dennis to the effect that the signers are willing to do all in their power to arrange matters and conciliate all parties as much as possible and recommends the French to lay down their arms—signed by G. Elwood<sup>2</sup> & others.

The Council of Delegates met again to-day at the Court House, and after arguing nearly all day on the advantages & disadvantages of a connection with Canada, nothing definite was arrived at. Towards the end of the meeting Mr. Thos. Bunn rose and spoke to the point that nothing had been done during the three days they had spent together—recommended laying down their arms and asking them (French) to state what the French wanted in substance, and spoke about letting Mr. McDougall in.

Mr. Riel arose at once and excitedly spoke to the effect that Mr. McDougall would never enter the settlement either in the capacity of a private individual or as Governor. The council then adjourned to meet again to-morrow.

It seems now difficult for them to come to any agreement during the day. Mr. James Ross and Louis Riel were the principal speakers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The letter is reproduced in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 90-92.

<sup>2</sup> No more is known of Grant than that he was the Canadian bookkeeper of Dennis's party; George Ellwood was a carpenter in Winnipeg and presumably a Canadian.

<sup>3</sup> See No. VIII below.



The mail arrived from the States this evening. No news of importance from the outside world regarding this country excepting Mr. Sanford's untruthful statement.

The weather bracing but pleasant & not too cold clear sky. Towards evening it got to be very sharp and frosty.

Col. Stutsman handed in a letter from the Chippewa Indians to Gov. McDougall which they had intended presenting him on his arrival at Pembina—but on their hearing of the French Half Breed movement in the settlement they drew back & did not present their letter fearing that if they did so it would be considered a joint Indian & Half Breed movement and thereby hurt the cause of their Half Breed brethren. They intend presenting their claims hereafter. Below is a copy of the letter in question.

English Territory

Near Pembina.

Sept. 26th 1869

His Excellency

Gov. McDougall.

Sir,

The undersigned representing the Chippewa Indians who own and occupy a large portion of the country known as the H.B.Co's Territory or Ruperts Land take the liberty to inform your Excellency that we have been delegated to meet your Excellency to remain for a few days at or near the Fort of the H.B.C. (near Pembina) in order to afford our people the opportunity to meet your Excellency in General Council that we may learn from your Excellency the intention of the Government you represent respecting our people and lands. We have heard that the said Government has purchased certain interests of the H.B.C. but we have never been informed *what* interests. Said interests could not have been lands for the simple reason that said company (according to the statement of old men) obtained only a right to occupy for a limited time a certain district of country.

White men said to be sent from the government you represent have commenced to divide our territory into small lots for the purpose as we have been informed of selling them to white people. And all this is being done without consulting us—without any treaty stipulations and as though these lands belong to your government. Hence do we insist upon a General Council and a full and satisfactory understanding before your Excellency in the name of your government assumes possession of the territory.

Our people greatly prefer to maintain friendly relations to your Excellency and the Government you represent and we well know that this can only be done by a thorough and amicable adjustment of our respective rights by a written Treaty. We know that we have rights and we are united as one man

in the determination to defend them at all hazards—and for the sake of our people as well as for the best interests of your Excellency and the Government you represent we trust that our rights will be fully respected and that we may be able to extend to you the right hand of friendship. On our own behalf as well as the people we represent we beg that your Excellency will accept our kindest regards.

PIE WASCH

CHA-WA-WE-ASH<sup>1</sup>

*Tuesday, 23rd November, 1869*

The first news this morning was that the French had taken the Fort and retained Gov. MacTavish, Dr. Cowan<sup>2</sup> and all the staff as prisoners, that no one was allowed to leave the Fort and that the cash and Books of the government of Assiniboia had been seized. The son of Rev. Geo Young<sup>3</sup> who is employed as a clerk by the H.B.C. climbed over the walls of the Fort and made his escape. This unexpected news greatly exaggerated as it was for a time made everyone wonder where all these things would end and what would be the next move of the French.

The English speaking delegates who were to meet at the Court House this morning deliberated whether to keep their appointment not feeling sure but that an attempt would be made on their personal liberty. However they decided upon going and somewhere between ten and eleven the French and English sides of the council of delegates met for the fourth time. The deliberations of the day resulted in the French delegates asserting that they meant to establish a provisional government in the meantime to await the arrangements that the Canadian government would make with them. The Hudson Bay Coy. rule would therefore end and the new provisional government would then be in a position to

<sup>1</sup> No other copy of this letter has been found. It appears in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 94–96, where Begg says it was prepared at the instigation of Enos Stutsman, but not presented to McDougall; McDougall refers to it in his letter of November 29 to Howe, C.S.P., 1870 (12), and reports that the Indians at Pembina at first agreed to own it, but later tore it up. It was an attempt to have the Indians of the region assume the same attitude as the *métis* had done.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. William Cowan, 1818–1902, came to Red River in 1849 in service of the Company to assist in the treatment of the Pensioners stationed at Fort Garry; in 1856 entered the Company's service and served at York and Moose Factory; in 1862 returned to Red River; was Member of Council of Assiniboia, 1863–1870; magistrate and officer in charge of Fort Garry in 1869–1870.

<sup>3</sup> The Reverend George Young, 1821–1910, Superintendent of Methodist missions, who came to Red River in 1868; founder of Grace Church; author of *Manitoba Memories* (Toronto, 1897); his son was G. H. Young.

treat with Canada. They asked their English speaking brethren to join them in this. As the English delegates were not prepared to act in this emergency they stated that they would go back to their people who sent them and get their views on the subject so Wednesday next week was set apart for all the delegates to reassemble. In the meantime the French hold in their possession the Records of the Colony and Fort Garry is closely guarded none of their officials (H.B.C.) being allowed egress from within its walls. Gov. McDougall it is understood on both sides is not to be allowed to come into the Territory either as Governor or as a private individual. Things are now working to a point and if the whole settlement coincide in erecting a provisional government steps are likely to be taken to immediately treat with Canada as to the terms on which she is to govern this country—what these steps may be remains to be shown.

The mail went out this evening.

Weather clear frosty but pleasant.

Some people think the Proclamation from the Queen may be even now in the hands of Governor MacTavish although such is not known as a fact.

J. H. McTavish<sup>1</sup> the accountant at Fort Garry on being requested to give up the Books and Records of the Colony refused but violence being threatened he gave them up under protest. James Ross before going to the Council to-day had a consultation with Dr. Schultz.

Mr. Bannatyne's letter was not read to-day in the council.

This evening Mr. Rodger Goulait [sic]<sup>2</sup> Collector of Customs for the settlement was taken from his house to the Fort to give an account of his customs matters to the Secretary of the French party, Mr. Louis Riel. Mr. Goulait after being detained a short time in Fort Garry was again liberated this evening.

Mr. H. F. O'Lone received a message this evening from Dr. Schultz to meet that gentleman in his own house. O'Lone however refused to go. The Dr. sent a second time for O'Lone but the latter still refused to go—stating at the same time to A. Strang<sup>3</sup> that Dr. Schultz was and had been

<sup>1</sup> J. H. McTavish, 1837-?, Canadian, entered service of Company, 1856; accountant at Fort Garry; a Roman Catholic and sympathetic with the *métis*.

<sup>2</sup> Roger Goulet, 1834-1902, *métis*, surveyor, magistrate, Collector of Customs, 1861-1870, and member of Council of Assiniboia, 1866-1870.

<sup>3</sup> A. Strang, 1848-1913, Canadian; came to Red River from Hamilton in 1868; entered employ of Bannatyne and Begg; later wholesale merchant, and Collector of Customs in Winnipeg.



one of the principal actors in causing the present troubles. Dr. Schultz sent word to O'Lone that he (the Dr.) was not responsible for Dr. Bown's doings but O'Lone could not see it in the same light as birds of a feather generally flock together.

*Wednesday, 24th November, 1869*

Weather rather mild and pleasant.

The Nor Wester came out to-day in a new form. The title being "The Nor Wester—the pioneer paper of the North West".<sup>1</sup> It comes out with a leader on Gov. MacTavish and the situation in which it seeks to belie that gentleman's motives in issuing his Address—accuses him of making omissions in matters of grave importance which so says the Nor Wester he has willingly made. It pitches into the *Globe & Geo. Brown*<sup>2</sup> for being partly the cause of the present troubles whereas it ought to have looked into Dr. Bowan's [sic] office. Makes statements regarding the new Government which it can have no authority for[.] In fact although the lies contained in the sheet of to-day are more moderate than usual the whole paper however is impregnated with them. Governor MacTavish is reported to be recovering from his recent long and severe illness.<sup>3</sup>

John Bruce stated to-day if he and his people the French had Mr. Sanford in their power to-day they would not let him leave the settlement so easily as he did the last time to circulate any more lies regarding them. Dr. Schultz having some carts arriving to-day with goods part of which are for the Government went to Mr. Riel and offered to produce his Invoices and pay anything that they demanded as toll on them. A subterfuge on the part of Dr. Schultz. Mr. Riel went up to the Dr.'s house to see about it.

Today Mr. Roger Goulait was sent for again to his house. On seeing Mr. Riel as to what was wanted—he Mr. Goulait was accompanied back to his house by a guard of two or more men with fixed bayonets and was ordered to return with all the papers in his possession connected with Customs matters. The guard therefore brought Mr. Goulait back to Fort Garry with the necessary papers which he handed over to

<sup>1</sup> No copy of this number has survived.

<sup>2</sup> The Honourable George Brown, 1818–1880, Canadian statesman, and proprietor and editor of the *Globe* of Toronto.

<sup>3</sup> The Governor was in fact suffering from the tuberculosis which incapacitated him during the winter and caused his death in August, 1870.

Mr. Riel—what is to be done with them remains to be seen. The Land Register of the settlement is also in the hands of the French as well as all the public funds in the way of notes for duties &c.

It has been the custom of Mr. Goulait as Collector of customs to take notes for the amounts of duties from the several merchants—this was done to accommodate and to make the payment of duties an easier task than if they had been obliged to pay them at once on receipt of goods and before trade could have a chance to become brisk. Some of the merchants and amongst others Dr. Schultz is very far behind in the payment of some of those notes. It is likely therefore that if a provisional government is agreed upon that the collection of those notes long past due will be one of the first things to be done. It is reported that the Government Pork &c. for “Snow” Superintendant [sic] of Road to the Lake of the Woods has been seized by the French—the reason of the seizure seems to be that the provisions might disappear in the excitement of the times and the French have placed a guard over it in the interest of the Canadien Government.

*Thursday, 25th November, 1869*

The weather to-day has been mild and pleasant growing cold towards evening.

No political news of any importance to chronical [sic] to-day.

It is reported that most of the English parishes are resolved not to send delegates to the meeting on Wednesday next. Kildonan is to send a letter however to say what the ideas of that parish is [sic].

Messengers have been despatched to different parts of the settlement to find out the views of the people and the general opinion of the English side is against a provisional government while the H.B.C. rule is still in force.

No mail arrived to-day it is therefore over due.

*Friday, 26th November, 1869*

It is reported that eight men have been despatched to take charge of Pembina Post<sup>1</sup> and on the other hand the English people threaten to take Lower Fort Garry and keep it in case of trouble by an armed force of one hundred men.

Wm. Hallet went down towards the Stone Fort and tried to raise a force to rescue the Pork belonging to Snow that had been seized; he however

<sup>1</sup> The Hudson's Bay Company post north of the boundary on British soil.

was unsuccessful—the fact being that the pork was not seized but for good purposes to prevent any loss arising to it. Mr. Barney Ross<sup>1</sup>—Dr. Bird—Mr. Bannatyne—Mr. O'Donohue—Mr. Alex. Logan<sup>2</sup> and Alexander Begg—had a long conference together in the office of Bannatyne & Begg the result of which was that all parties present agreed that instead of forming a provisional government as proposed by the French it would be advisable to allow the old H.B.C. Rule to go on as it has been accustomed to in the shape of a legislative council and that the people elect an executive council whose duties would be to treat with the Canadian government as to the terms on which this country should be annexed to Canada. Mr. O'Donohue pledged himself that he would do his utmost in using his influence with the French to further the scheme—as all present felt that it would very likely be the means of uniting both sides of the settlement in the question of the day. In the evening a meeting was held in the Engine house<sup>3</sup> to hear the report of the Town delegates and also to determine on the future action of the inhabitants of the Town of Winnipeg in reference to the present troubles. The meeting was “packed” by Dr. Schultz with a number of Canadiens & others who had little interest at stake in the country and for the sole reason apparently of backing the Dr. in any of his proposals or else breaking up the meeting.<sup>4</sup> On the other hand there was a large party against them and as most of those present were armed there was every likelihood of the meeting breaking up in a general row. Mr. Louis Riel, Secretary of the French party, was introduced to the meeting and was applauded on his entrance into the room. Dr. Bown and one or two such as himself attempted to hiss but the demonstration was put down immediately by the meeting. Mr. Riel spoke at some length and spoke well and fairly as all agreed even the Schultz party applauding at times during his speech. He said that the idea of forming a provisional government was because the present rule was too weak and perhaps biased—that the movement was altogether a French one and that they merely invited the English side to join them as one body. They did not intend to attempt to coerce anyone into their views [sic] neither was it

<sup>1</sup> Bernard Rogan Ross, 1827–1874, chief factor, son-in-law of Chief Factor Donald Ross but no connection of James Ross.

<sup>2</sup> Alexander Logan, 1841–1894, Red River merchant and owner of the river lot on the north side of the village of Winnipeg; later mayor of Winnipeg.

<sup>3</sup> The Fire Engine House on Post Office Road, Winnipeg.

<sup>4</sup> This meeting is probably to be regarded as the first attempt of Schultz to demonstrate that the Settlement was not united in resistance to Canada.



their intention to interfere with anyone's rights in the settlement. This was the substance of his speech. Mr. Powers<sup>1</sup> from Sturgeon Creek made a bombast speech refer[r]ing to the English flag and that all had to bend to it & so forth remarks not called for as there had never been anything else but loyalty to Britain expressed on all sides during these troubles. Dr. Schultz rose and said that he did not think Mr. Powers who was not a resident of the town had any right to speak at the meeting. So Mr. Powers was overpowered and left.

A great many motions and amendments to motions were made but as it was evident that no agreement could be arrived at on any subject and that it could [not] be ascertained who had the right to vote on resolutions and as certain remarks had been made derogatory to the chairman<sup>2</sup> by the Schultz party, it was resolved that as the chairman had been insulted the meeting should adjourn—which was immediately carried out—the meeting seperated [sic] without a row.

Dr. Schultz at the meeting moved that any one who had resided in the town a week had a right to vote but this preposterous idea was not carried out.

James Ross attended the meeting but did not speak.

The mail came in to-day but brought no news of importance from abroad.

The weather was mild and pleasant all day.

*Saturday, 27th November, 1869*

This morning Mr. Bannatyne as chairman of the meeting last evening issued circulars as follows to all the householders and property owners in the town.

Sir,

You are respectfully requested to attend a meeting of House holders of the Town of Winnipeg to decide the question before the meeting of last evening as to who are to be considered as entitled to vote.

The meeting will be held at Geo. Emerlings Hotel<sup>3</sup> at 3. O'Clock p.m.

[Signed] A. G. B. BANNATYNE

CHAIRMAN

Town of Winnipeg

Nov. 27th 1869.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Michael Power, Chelsea pensioner, late Sergeant of the Dragoon Guards.

<sup>2</sup> A. G. B. Bannatyne.

<sup>3</sup> George Emerling, or Emmerling, a German-American, came to Red River in 1861, and was proprietor of Emmerling's Hotel.

<sup>4</sup> This letter appears in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 105.

During the morning all was done that could be to induce Riel the Secretary of the French to agree to the proposition of allowing the H.B.C. to go on as a government until the Proclamation is issued and in the meantime for both sides of the settlers to unite in one body through representatives in the form of an executive council or committee to seek for the right of the people. Oscar Malmros [sic]<sup>1</sup> the American Consul did all in his power to convince Riel that such a cause [sic] would be the only right one. Nothing definite could be got out of Mr. Riel up to 3 O'Clock and at that hour according to appointment the House holders of the Town met at George Emerlings Hotel.

Mr. Alexander Begg was appointed chairman of the meeting and Mr. Wm. Coldwell secretary. Dr. Schultz rose and stated that a few householders as well as property holders had not been invited to attend in answer to which Mr. Alex Begg stated that through the instructions of Mr. Bannatyne the chairman of previous meeting he had sent out the invitations that no one was willingly omitted and that the noninviting [sic] the parties spoken of by the Dr. was an oversight—they could be easily sent for in a few minutes and would have the right to attend.

After some discussion it was moved that in the opinion of the meeting the boundaries of the Town for the present should be considered to extend as far as but not inclusive of Fort Garry on the south, as far as Mr. Alexander Logans on the north, as far as the Red River on the east and two miles out on the plains from the river on the west side.

It was then moved by H. McKenney that all householders and property owners and six months residents be allowed to vote at public town meetings.

Dr. Schultz moved in amendment that three weeks' residents in town be allowed the right to vote.

Mr. O'Donohue (representing the Sisters)<sup>2</sup> moved in amendment upon previous amendment that all householders, property owners and seven months residents be allowed the right to vote.

The last amendment was put to the meeting and carried. 19 yeas 13 nays.

Dr. Schultz persisted in wishing his amendment put but as it was out of

<sup>1</sup> Oscar Malmros, 1826–1909, a naturalized American of Danish birth; settled in St. Paul, Minnesota, 1853; Adjutant-General of Minnesota, 1861–1865; served as Quartermaster in General Sibley's Sioux campaign of 1862–1863; City Justice of St. Paul; appointed American Consul in Winnipeg, July 1, 1869; arrived in Winnipeg, August 13, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> The Sisters of Charity, or Grey Nuns of St. Boniface, who had a school in the village.

order it could not be done. The meeting then adjourned. This evening an assurance was given by Mr. Riel to Mr. Bannatyne in presence of General Oscar Malmaros, Mr. H. S. Donaldson<sup>1</sup> & others to the effect that the French would agree to meet the English side on equal terms in forming an executive council to lay the claims of the people before Canada and that in the meantime the H.B.C. rule should be recognised by all as the government of the country and as such supported by all. This assurance was given in writing by Mr. Bannatyne to Mr. Barney Ross and by verbal message to Dr. Bird and on the strength of said assurance Mr. Alexander Begg volunteered to go and notify St. Andrews Parish of the turns [sic] affairs had taken as well as to see Mr. Bunn on the same mission.

Weather cold but cloudy.

Mail left this evening for the east.

Some excitement was got up to-day about the government Pork. It is reported that Dr. Schultz represented his property as being endangered by having the Pork in his possession, in fact that the guns of the Fort were levelled on his house. Some Canadiens influenced by Schultz got excited over this and resorted to arms—but the whole thing was quieted down by an assurance to Dr. Schultz that neither private property nor the Canadien Pork would suffer by the guard being put upon it as it was only done to keep sight of the Pork lest it should disappear or be destroyed in the excitement of the times and that should such occur it would likely reflect to the discredit of the French. It was also reported towards evening that an attempt is to be made to-night by a party of Canadiens to take Fort Garry from the French—the report was not credited.

*Sunday, 28th November, 1869*

Weather blustering—disagreeable—snowing hard.

Mr. Alexander Begg started on his mission towards lower Fort Garry. Mr. Bannatyne started to go and see Mr. Robert Tait to acquaint him with the new proposals for the settlement of the present troubles. Mr. Alexander Begg drove as far as the Lower Fort Garry and Mr. Flett<sup>2</sup> in charge of that post harnessed his horse and drove him to Mr. Bunn's residence.

<sup>1</sup> H. S. Donaldson, an American of Canadian birth who had come to Winnipeg in 1865 as agent of N. W. Kittson, after service in the Sioux campaign ; a stationer ; an annexationist.

<sup>2</sup> Chief Trader William Flett.



Mr. Bunn fully coincided with the idea of an Executive Council and decided on attending the conference of delegates next Wednesday.

Mr. Flett also coincided with the movement as a good one.

Mr. Bunn stated that a great deal of excitement had been caused in his neighbourhood by false reports regarding the Government Pork question—and that on learning the truth that it did not amount to what was represented, he had to turn back over two hundred men to their homes who had turned out armed to go to Fort Garry and rescue the Pork. In justice to these men it is right to say that it had been represented to them that private property and lives were in danger.

Mr. Bunn after having sent back his own people had to send back about fifty more who had come from the Indian Settlement and arrived at his house about two O'Clock in the morning.

*Monday, 29th November, 1869*

Weather still stormy—Snowing and blowing.

Mr. Bunn drove Mr. Alex. Begg to the Stone Fort where they had an interview with Mr. Flett—the latter was still of the opinion that an Executive Council of the people to treat for their rights was the best thing under the circumstances.

Mr. Truthwaite<sup>1</sup> being at Lower Fort Garry he and Mr. Begg called together on Mr. Hay,<sup>2</sup> Miller in St. Andrews Parish. Mr. Hay agreed with the Executive Council scheme and agreed to a meeting of parishioners being called. Mr. Truthwaite and Mr. Begg then called on Rev. Mr. Gairdner<sup>3</sup> who also finally agreed to the same thing and agreed to give notice after service to-morrow "Thanksgiving Day" that a meeting of the parishioners would be held that afternoon in the School-house.

Mr. Gunn (delegate for St. Andrews) and a Mr. Geddes<sup>4</sup> called this evening at Mr. Truthwaite's and met Mr. Begg. Mr. Gunn also agreed to the measure of an Executive council, and resolved to aid in calling a meeting to-morrow.

All parties seemed glad that a peaceful solution of the present difficulties seemed probable.

<sup>1</sup> Probably Thomas Truthwaite, son of Jacob Truthwaite, and a son-in-law of Andrew McDermot.

<sup>2</sup> E. H. G. G. Hay, 1840-1918, later member of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council of Manitoba.

<sup>3</sup> The Reverend Joseph Phelps Gardiner, incumbent of St. Andrew's Church, 1865-1872.

<sup>4</sup> Not identified.

Mr. Gunn said if he should be unable from the state of his health to attend on Wednesday he would send a letter to that effect to the conference of delegates. It is reported to-day and substantiated by parties who were present at the time that Mr. James Ross and Maurice Lowman attended a meeting at St. Andrews and led the people to understand that 220 Two hundred and twenty of the Scotch were ready and in fact that One hundred & eight were going to the Town the next day (Friday last) to take charge of the Government Pork and called on them to support their fellow countrymen. As soon as this was heard of by the Scotch (early next morning) Alex. Polson<sup>1</sup> was sent down the Settlement to say that Mr. Ross was not authorized to make such statements and as far as the Scotch were concerned the Government Pork might go to the d - - - l.

At the same meeting it was given out to the people that Gov. MacTavish was a prisoner—also Dr. Cowan—and J. H. MacTavish, and a resolution was passed that Gov. MacTavish be released at all hazards. There is a very strong feeling against Canadiens and others trying to start a fight prematurely. Mr. James Ross spoke for two hours at the meeting in St. Andrews last Thursday evening and is reported to have been so drunk that he left his vomit on the floor.<sup>2</sup> Maurice Lowman at the same time made a war speech. Mr. James Ross is very much condemned in Kildonan the parish he represented as delegate for the course he pursued in St. Andrews.

Mail arrived this morning.

*Tuesday, 30th November, 1869*

Weather clear and frosty.

Mr. Riel to-day retracted from his promise in favor of an Executive Council and insisted on the formation of a provisional government and the downfall of the H.B.C. rule—the latter because it was dead already & therefore not in force nor able to protect the people. When Mr. Alexander Begg returned from the Stone Fort he met Mr. Riel, Mr. O'Donohue, Mr. O'Lone, Mr. McKenney and Mr. Bannatyne in Mr. McKenney's house and there heard that his trip to St. Andrews was a futile one on account of the French withdrawing from the movement. Some considerable time was occupied in trying to convince Mr. Riel as to the practicability of the thing but with no success. Some of the French

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Polson, 1840-1905, of St. John's; later alderman of Winnipeg.

<sup>2</sup> The unpleasant comment is not corroborated, though there is evidence that Ross was intemperate at this time. Begg manifests a dislike of Ross in the *Journal*.

council however differed in their opinions from Mr. Riel and some hope is entertained that in their council (French) to-night Mr. Riel may be induced to give way.

Mr. Bunn arrived this evening to attend the conference to-morrow. Some suspicions are afloat that the Queen's Proclamation will be out to-morrow but nothing definite is known.

The English and Scotch Half Breeds are forming in companies for drilling purposes to be ready in a case of emergency—all the old guns are being scraped together and put into the hands of men who are ready to turn out when called. Thus two sides of the settlement are armed and ready to fight against each other on provocation but the universal feeling is against fighting with each other. All are in favor of sticking together for the people's rights—representation. A meeting of Householders in the Town of Winnipeg was called for 5 O'Clock this evening but on account of the change in Mr. Riel's purposes the meeting was postponed till further notice.

Mr. James Ross, Mr. Wm. Tait, Mr. Rob. Tait, Mr. Thos. Bunn, Mr. John Bruce, Mr. Riel, Mr. Colin Inkster,<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bannatyne, Mr. Alex. Begg and others met by chance to discuss the political state of the country.

A good deal of discussion ensued. Mr. James Ross took the side that Canada had the right to certain councilmen in the council of Red River—and that the people of this country would then be no worse off than they have been all along. Mr. Wm. Tait, Mr. Thos. Bunn took the stand that the people had certain rights one of which was that of representation and that the people of this country would fight if necessary for their rights. Mr. James Ross stated he did not believe the people of Red River would fight for their rights and that they had not pluck enough to do so. Mr. Ross on being accused of being inconsistent [sic] in having asked the people of St. Andrews to come forward and fight—tried to deny the accusation but on its being pressed and proved against him he owned that he had been excited and had made a great mistake especially as the calling out of these men might have plunged the whole country into civil war.

Mr. Wm. Tait and all present stated that they were ready to support the rights of the people. Mr. Ross was the exception he saying that the people themselves would not support them—but they wished to do so in

<sup>1</sup> Colin Inkster, 1843-1934, of St. John's, son of John Inkster, Councillor of Assiniboia; later member of Legislative Council of Manitoba, of the Assembly and Executive Council, and Sheriff of Eastern Judicial District, 1882-1934.



a legal and constitutional way. Mr. Bunn and Mr. Ross came to high words and nearly blows but with this exception the meeting passed off pleasantly.

Two men arrived late in the night from Pembina with despatches it is said for Col. Stutsman who yet remains in the settlement—& it is feared that gentleman's influence here is not for the good of the people.

The mail went out to-night.

*Wednesday, 1st December, 1869*

This morning the news was circulated amongst a few that the Queen's Proclamation was in the Settlement and that Col. Dennis had arrived at Lower Fort Garry.

Another petition was handed round this morning by Wm. Drever<sup>1</sup> signed by Dr. Schultz & others. Mr. Drever was told plainly that these petitions were doing harm instead of good in the excited state of the times and he was advised to have nothing to do with them—he however persisted in his course. The English Delegates had not gone to meet those from the French side when Mr. Robert Tait appeared amongst them with a copy of the Queen's Proclamation certified to.

The document produced considerable stir amongst the English delegates and as the French Council were then sitting Mr. Bannatyne volunteered to go and place the Proclamation before that body. He therefore started for that purpose, the English delegates in the meantime remaining in the office of Bannatyne & Begg to await the result of his interview with the French.

In a short time the following letter was received:

To Dr. Bird—Mr. Bunn—Mr. W. & R Tait—Mr. Gunn & all the English Delegates—I have shown the Proclamation to all the French Delegates who are here now. They will be glad if you come up. All are quiet and pleased and I believe much good can be done by coming here at once.

Yours sincerely

[Signed] A. G. B. BANNATYNE.<sup>2</sup>

The English delegates present when the note arrived consisting of Mr. Bunn, Mr. Gunn, Messrs W. & R. Tait and Dr. Bird started immediately for the Court House.

<sup>1</sup> William Drever, Jr., 1844–?, son of William Drever, Sr.; like his father, a Red River merchant.

<sup>2</sup> The note appears in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 109.

After discussing matters till after four O'Clock the French asked to be allowed to counsel [sic] amongst themselves till 6 O'Clock when all would again meet.

At 6 O'Clock p.m. all accordingly met and the French having drawn out a list of rights which they claimed, the English agreed to nearly all of them and it was proposed to send delegates to Mr. McDougall to see what could be done in the matter. Mr. Riel however then said that until these rights claimed were secured to the people of Red River by an act of Canadian Parliament they would not consent to Mr. McDougall entering the settlement and that they would not accept any promises verbally or written from Mr. McDougall; an act of Parliament would only satisfy them and that until that act was passed Mr. McDougall would stay out. The English Delegates could not agree to this and the meeting separated pretty much as they commenced.

The English Delegates afterwards met together and spoke of the expediency of sending two of their number to see Mr. McDougall & lay what had been done before him & leave it to his own judgement whether to come in or not. Mr. Ross opposed it and it was finally agreed that all parties would wait & see what to-morrow may bring forth. Mr. Ross arrived late at the conference of French and English Delegates and did not speak at all while there.

Weather clear cold & frosty.

The Proclamation is as follows

WILLIAM MACDOUGALL

"VICTORIA" by the Grace of God the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland Queen Defender of the Faith, &c. &c. &c.

To all whom these Presents shall come

L.G.  
*The North  
West  
Territories*<sup>1</sup>

Proclamation

Whereas, by The British North America Act 1867, it was (amongst other things) enacted that it should be lawful for Her Majesty by and with the advice of Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council on address from the Houses of Parliament of Canada to admit Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory or either of them into the Union or Dominion of Canada on such terms and conditions as are in the Address expressed, and as Her Majesty thinks fit to approve;

And Whereas for the purpose of carrying into effect the said provisions of "The British North America Act 1867", "The Rupert's Land Act 1868"

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

enacted and declared that it should be competent for the "Governor and Company of Adventurers of England trading into Hudson's Bay" to surrender to "Her Majesty" and for "Her Majesty" by any instrument under Her Sign Manual and Signet to accept a Surrender of all or any of the Lands, Territories Powers and Authorities whatsoever, granted or purported to be granted by certain Letters Patent of His late Majesty King Charles the Second to the said Governor and Company within Ruperts Land upon such terms and conditions as should be agreed upon by and between Her Majesty and the said Governor and Company.

And whereas by the Ruperts Land Act 1868 it is further enacted that from the date of the admission of Ruperts Land into the Dominion of Canada as aforesaid it should be lawful for the Parliament of Canada to make ordain and establish with the Land and Territory so admitted as aforesaid all such laws Institutions and ordinances and to constitute such courts and officers as may be necessary for the Peace, Order and Good Government of Her Majesty's subjects and others therein.

And Whereas it is further provided by the said Act that until otherwise enacted by the said Parliament of Canada all the Powers Authorities and Jurisdiction of the Several Courts of Justice now established in Ruperts Land and of the several officers thereof and of all magistrates and justices now acting within the said Limits shall continue in full force and effect therein.

And Whereas the said Governor and Company have surrendered to Her Majesty and Her Majesty has accepted a surrender of all the Lands Territories Rights Privileges Liberties Franchises Powers and Authorities granted or purported to be granted by the said Letters Patent upon certain Terms and conditions agreed upon by and between Her Majesty and the said Governor and Company.

And Whereas Her Majesty by and with the advice of Her Majesty's most Honourable Privy Council and on an Address from both the Houses of the Parliament of Canada in pursuance of the one hundred and forty sixth section of "The British North America Act 1867" hath declared that Ruperts Land and the North Western Territory shall from the first day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine be admitted into and become part of the Dominion of Canada upon the terms and conditions expressed in the Said Address of which Her Majesty has approved and Ruperts Land and the said North Western Territory are admitted into the Union and have become part of the Dominion of Canada accordingly.

And Whereas the Parliament of Canada by an Act entitled "An Act for the Temporary Government of Ruperts Land and the North Western Territory when united with Canada" enacted that it should be lawful for the Governor by any order or Order[s] to be by him from time to time made with the advice of the Privy Council (and subject to such conditions and restrictions as to him



should seem meet) to authorize and empower such officer as he may from time to time appoint as Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories to make Provision for the administration of Justice therein and generally to make ordain and establish all such laws and Institutions and Ordinances as may be necessary for the Peace Order and Good Government of Her Majesty's Subjects and others therein.

Now know ye that We have seen fit by our Royal [Letters] Patent bearing date the twenty ninth day of September in the Year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine to appoint the Honorable William McDougall of the city of Ottawa in the Province of Ontario in our Dominion of Canada and member of our Privy Council for Canada and Companion of Our Most Honorable Order of the Bath on from and after the day to be named by us for the admission of Ruperts Land and the North Western Territory aforesaid into the Union or Dominion of Canada to wit, on from and after the first day of December in the year of Our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine to be during Our Pleasure the Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories.

And we did thereby authorize and empower and require and Command him in due manner to do and execute in all things that shall belong to his Said Command and the trust we have reposed in him according to the several provisions and instructions granted or appointed him by virtue of Our Said Commission and the Act of the Parliament of Canada herein before recited and according to such instructions as have been or may from time to time be given to him and to such laws as are or shall be enforced within the North West Territories.

Of all which our loving subjects of our said Territories and all others whom these Presents may concern are hereby required to take notice and govern themselves accordingly.

In Testimony Whereof we have caused these Our Letters to be made Patent and the Great Seal of our Said North West Territories to be hereunto affixed—Witness our Trusty and well Beloved William MacDougall member of our Privy Council for Canada and Companion of Our Most Honorable Order of the Bath Lieutenant Governor of our North West Territories, &c &c &c. At the Red River in our aforesaid North West Territories the first day of December in the year of Our Lord One thousand eight hundred and sixty nine and in the thirty third year of our Reign. By Command.

[Signed] J. A. N. PROVENCHER

SECRETARY

GOD SAVE THE QUEEN

Winnipeg December 1st 1869

Certified a true copy

[Signed] D. A. GRANT.

## 196 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

The original of the above copy is said to be in the Settlement in some place of safety.<sup>1</sup>

*Thursday, 2nd December, 1869*

The news came in this morning that Col. Dennis had been appointed deputy Governor by Mr. McDougall with full powers to act in establishing the government.

Augustin Nolin<sup>2</sup>—François Nolin<sup>3</sup> and one Perrault<sup>4</sup> met Mr. Bannatyne in the office of Bannatyne & Begg to consult with him on the best course to take in affairs. Mr. Bannatyne pointed out to them that the stubborn course Mr. Riel was taking would be likely to bring them in trouble & explained also that an act of Parliament was a tedious thing to be got at—it was sufficient to take Mr. McDougall's word that all would be done for them that was just and reasonable. The Nolins & Perrault proposed that fifty men from each side meet together and discuss their rights; when these rights are arrived at then that they should send delegates to Mr. McDougall to place them before him and that if he would promise them or promise to do all he could to get them they would bring him into the settlement.<sup>5</sup>

In the midst of their conversation Mr. Bannatyne received a letter that the French party wished to see him at the Fort & hoping to do good he placed [sic; in his pocket?] a copy in French & one in English of the Queen's Proclamation and went down to the Fort.

He stayed there till evening and left them with the hope of their coming to some definite course of action for the good.

He left a copy of the Proclamation with Mr. MacTavish (ex governor)<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This spurious Proclamation was printed in C.S.P., 1870 (12); it is reproduced in E. H. Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 893-895, and in Begg, *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 115-117. Except for a word omitted, the copy in the *Journal* agrees verbally with these. No original copy seems to have survived, but Oliver does not cite the source of his text.

<sup>2</sup> Augustin Nolin, 1827-?, brother of Charles Nolin; also known by Indian name of Migzêns, "Young Eagle"; see p. 300 of the *Journal*.

<sup>3</sup> François Nolin, 1832-?, brother of Charles and Augustin.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably Jean Baptiste Morin, *dit* Perrault, see note 2 on page 167. Morin and the Nolins were from Oak Point and disposed to be independent of Riel.

<sup>5</sup> This is in effect what was to be done by Donald A. Smith as Commissioner from Canada in January, 1870.

<sup>6</sup> The comment illustrates the effect of McDougall's Proclamation on opinion in Red River.

as strange to say that gentleman had not seen the document or a copy of it at the time.

The two Nolins Francis and Augustin again saw Mr. Bannatyne in the evening hopeful of doing some good in bringing matters to a close. After a long conversation in which Mr. Bannatyne urged them to see McDougall and take his word they left to see Jas. McKay<sup>1</sup>—to consult with that gentleman.

In the evening news was received that a party of Canadiens were organizing to go and join Col. Dennis<sup>2</sup> as Mr. Riel had a strong guard in town it was feared that a collision would take place between the two parties ending in a fight.

Mr. Bannatyne on hearing this advised some of the influential French who happened to be at hand to make Riel recall his guard from the Town into Fort Garry and on every account to keep Riel himself in the Fort. They left to take Mr. Bannatyne's advice. About 30 men left the Town in sleds to go and see Col. Dennis fortunately no collision occurred. A good deal of excitement was felt this evening by some of the townspeople lest a row should happen to-night. The parties who went to keep Riel in the Fort was [sic] not successful as that gentleman with his guard of six or eight men searched a number of houses for some purpose it is said to find one Cline<sup>3</sup> whom they wished to arrest. Amongst other houses they searched that of Dr. Schultz—unfortunately the Dr. was away from home.

Nothing further of any moment occurred.

Weather still cold.

Mail arrived this evening—bringing meagre accounts from Canada regarding our troubles—the Hamilton Spectator in an article places the blame on the “so called Canadien party” and Ottawa officials in Red River—the proper shoulders to bear the blame.<sup>4</sup> The French party to-night stopped both the “Nor Wester” and [“] Red River Pioneer [”]

<sup>1</sup> James McKay, ?-1879; Scots half-breed and Roman Catholic; famous guide and plains trader; Councillor of Assiniboia; later member of Executive Council, Legislative Council, and Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

<sup>2</sup> Dennis had been at Pembina with McDougall; he had brought in the Proclamation and was now at the Lower Fort.

<sup>3</sup> George Klyne, later member of the Convention of Forty. The name is a corruption of that of a settler of Netherlands descent, Klein; but the Klynes were accounted *métis*.

<sup>4</sup> This article would be based on accounts by W. E. Sanford and W. J. Turner of Hamilton.



from publishing their paper—a few sheets of the Pioneer already struck off were confiscated and brought to Mr. Riel.

*Friday, 3rd December, 1869*

A meeting of the French was again held in Fort Garry and on invitation Mr. Bannatyne again attended to try and move them if possible in the right direction.

The party of Canadiens that left Town to join Col. Dennis last evening returned at noon to-day the Col. having told them that he was glad to see them ready to turn out but that he did not require their immediate services—he however enrolled them it is said on pay—the Col. expressed himself hopeful of being able to settle the difficulties amicably without resorting to fighting. News went down to the Fort while the French council were sitting that a large number of men were assembling in Town to attack them. This had the worst possible effect and succeeded in breaking up the meeting before anything definite was done. A number of the French who were outside the Riel party came in and asked to be allowed to join. This shows that when it comes to fighting all the French will join together no matter what their differences may be now. There being only one man on guard in the Nor Wester Office they turned him out but Mr. Riel soon afterwards put an extra guard on and to-night there is a force of about fifty men in the Town all armed from the French side. News came in from the Portage that George Racette alias “Shamon”<sup>1</sup> was on the way into the settlement with 1100 Sioux [sic] Indians.

A meeting of Towns people was called in H. F. O’Lone’s place to form a company for the protection of the Town from these Indians. About 24 names were enrolled at once and H. F. O’Lone[,] Capt. Donaldson and J. Kennedy<sup>2</sup> were appointed as a committee to enroll more names and see what arms can be obtained in town. The

<sup>1</sup> The notorious “Shawman” (in French “Châmane”, an Indian name of opprobrious meaning) of the stories in the American press of the attempt of the Canadians to raise the refugee Sioux against the French and Americans. Racette was a plains trader, who was closely connected with Schultz, and a law-breaker of especial ill-repute. He is undoubtedly the “Rosette” of Begg’s semi-authentic *Dot-it-Down* (Toronto, 1871) in which the characters of the Canadian party are satirized under readily penetrable pseudonyms. In *The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 148, Begg says that Racette attempted, but failed, to raise the Sioux. See also Isaac Cowie, *The Company of Adventurers* (Toronto, 1913), pp. 448–449.

<sup>2</sup> J. C. Kennedy, gunsmith of Winnipeg, presumably a Canadian.

following composition by a gentleman was written on late events in Red River.

Chanson  
des tribulations d'un roi malheureux

- 1st Est-il rien sur la terre  
De plus intéressant  
Que la tragique histoire  
De McDougall et ses gens !  
Je vous la conterai  
Veuillez bien m'écouter.
- 2nd Sur notre territoire  
Devenu ses Etats  
Il venait — ce bon père  
Règener un potentat  
Ainsi l'avait réglé  
Le Ministre Cartier.
- 3rd Le coeur gros d'espérance  
Partout du Canada  
Il dit j'ai confiance  
Qu'on vivra bien là-bas :  
Ah ! quel bonheur !! ma foi !!!  
Je suis donc enfin Roi !
- 4th Comptant sur les richesses  
Qu'il trouverait chez nous  
Il eut la mal-adresse  
De ne pas prendre un sou  
Même pour traverser  
Un pays étranger.
- 5th Le juif errant — plus sage  
En portait cinq au moins  
Dont il faisait usage  
Dans un cas de besoin.  
C'était mieux fait, on dit,  
Que de prendre à credit,
- 6th Mais trêve de remarques !  
Allons droit au plus court  
Suivons notre Monarque  
Entouré de sa cours—  
Ce bon roi Dagobert  
Traversant le désert.
- 7th Il paraît que l'orage  
Dans son gouvernement

- Durant tout le voyage  
 Eclata fort souvent  
 L'union qui rend plus fort  
 Etait loin de ce corps.
- 8th Mais malgré la tempête  
 Cameron à son bord  
 Voulait décrire la fête  
 Qui l'attendait à port  
 Et la voir imprimée  
 Avant qu'elle fut passée.
- 9th Ce ministre fidèle  
 Etant loin de prévoir  
 Qu'elle ne serait pas telle  
 Qu'il avait cru la voir  
 Funeste illusion !  
 Quelle déception !!
- 10th Déjà de son royaume  
 Le sol il va toucher  
 Quand tout-à-coup un homme  
 Lui défend d'avancer  
 Lui disant — " Mon ami  
 C'est assez loin ici."
- 11th Etonné de l'audace  
 De ces hardis mortels,  
 Il emploie les menaces  
 Pour vaincre ces rebelles  
 Mais cela fut en vain, —  
 Il ne put gagner rien.
- 12th Obligé de reprendre  
 La voie du Canada,  
 Il lui faudra attendre  
 De l'argent pour cela  
 Car pour manger ici  
 Il prend tout à credit.
- 13th Aujourd'hui sa couronne  
 Est un songe passé  
 Le trône qu'on lui donne  
 Est un trône percé  
 Mais il dit qu'à présent  
 Il est bien suffisant.
- Morale —————
- 14th Adieu, Châteaux d'Espagne



- Déjà si bien bâtis,  
 Beau pays de Cocagne  
 Acheté à grand prix ;  
 Il faut laisser les plans  
 Tirés depuis longtemps.
- 15th Trouver de riches mines,  
 Ouvrir un long chemin,  
 Pour pénétrer en Chine,  
 Et voire même au Tonquin,  
 Etait pour tous ces gens  
 De petits jeux d'enfant.
- 16th Aujourd'hui qui va dire  
 Monsieur le Gouvernement  
 Sera-t-il voir de rire  
 Quand il verra ses plans  
 Déjà tous culbutés  
 Par tous les Bois-brûlés !<sup>1</sup>

Mem.—“ Bois Brûlés ” is the French term for “ half-breed ”.

BALLAD  
 OF THE TRIALS OF AN UNFORTUNATE KING

Is there anything on earth  
 Of an interest more grand  
 Than the story—check your mirth—  
 Of McDougall and his band !  
 But listen to me well  
 And the tale I will you tell.

Upon our broad and noble land,  
 Now become his realm of state,  
 He has come, this worthy man,  
 To hold sway as potentate,  
 As him did command and say  
 The wily Minister Cartier.

His bosom swelling out with pride,  
 Down in Canada, all over,  
 “ I am right sure,” he loudly cried,  
 “ That I shall be deep in clover !  
 And, my word, what luck does bring !  
 Now at last I am a king ! ”

<sup>1</sup> The authorship of this mocking ballad is ascribed by Mrs. A. N. MacLeod, on the strength of a family tradition, to Pierre Falcon, the *métis* bard of St. François-Xavier. See the similar piece quoted in G. Dugas, *Histoire véridique*, pp. 98-101. A free translation follows.

Counting on the easy money  
 He among us here would spy  
 He thought the idea merely funny  
 To have a single penny by,  
 Even for to pay his way  
 And o'er a foreign land to stray.\*

The wandering Hebrew—much more wise—  
 Bore with him a dime at least,  
 With which he could, should need arise,  
 Purchase crust or hire a beast  
 As is better far, 'tis said,  
 Than to borrow, or beg bread.

But no more of persiflage !  
 Let us take the shortest way  
 And pursue our Monarch sage  
 And his court in its display,  
 This right royal Dagobert†  
 Wandering on across the desert.

It does seem that passions wild  
 Raged within this royal court  
 And through all that journey piled  
 Rage on rage, and tempers short  
 Drove the union which is strength  
 From that cortège a great length.

But what if tempests intervene—  
 The bold Cameron for his part  
 Wished to depict the future scene  
 Which awaited man and cart  
 And to see set down in print  
 What was in morrow's eye a glint.

That tried and trusty officer  
 Was far from coming to foresee  
 That nothing would in fact occur  
 Of all that he had hoped would be—  
 Illusion of the hopeful eye,  
 Deception of most dismal dye.

Just as our king was setting foot  
 Upon his realm's fair soil  
 A man at once sprang up and put  
 A stay unto his progress royal,

\* McDougall, like all travellers in the North-West, drew on the Hudson's Bay Company for his needs, the Government of Canada, of course, settling the account.

† Dagobert II, a *fainéant* Merovingian king.

And to him said—" Hold hard, my friend,  
You find right here your journey's end."

By the boldness set aback  
Of these mortals bold enow,  
He uses threats, and worse, alack,  
Such rebellious folk to cow,  
But 'tis all in vainest vain;  
Not an inch can he thus gain.

Forced to wend his weary way  
O'er the plains the way he came,  
He finds he must a period stay  
To collect some cash for same,  
For, to eat while here at all,  
He did upon his credit call.

And to-day his royal crown  
Is a dream the dawn dispersed  
And the throne to sit him down  
Is a throne with bottom pierced,\*  
But he says that for a spell  
It will do him very well.

#### Moral

Farewell, castles, then, of Spain,  
All so well and truly built,  
Farewell, land of bright Cockagne  
For which so much gold was spilt ;  
He must now his blueprints shed  
Drawn up so far ahead

To open up mines rich in ore,  
To build a highway broad and fair,  
To drive to China's distant shore  
Or to Tonkin the rich repair  
Was for these folk athirst for fame  
The merest children's idle game.

And lord and master Government,  
What will it say, what will it do,  
Will it be with laughter spent,  
When it sees its plans askew,  
All askew and tossed away  
By every daring Bois-Brûlé !

\* McDougall had brought in his luggage a handsome gubernatorial chair of state ; see Begg's *Journal*, March 26, 1870 ; it is to be inferred that he had also brought a piece of domestic furniture likely to be rare in Red River.



*Saturday, 4th December, 1869*

There was a movement this morning to acquaint the relations of the French living amongst the English and connected with them by marriage that the demands of the French were only for their rights from Canada and that they did not intend to molest the balance of the settlers. Further news was brought in to-day that the Sioux Indians were quite near the settlement but afterwards the report was contradicted. Gov. MacTavish is keeping a lookout on the Indians on the plains and he has as yet heard no information that any are coming into the settlement. Donaldson[,] O'Lone & Kennedy have been at work enrolling further members for the Town Company and looking up all the arms it is possible to find.

It is reported that Dr. Schultz has removed the greater part of his furniture and goods and has barricaded his house against any attack.

A report is current that an attempt is to be made to hoist the flag on the pole opposite Dr. Schultz house—this the Dr. denies—and on the other hand the French say that if it is hoisted they will hoist the British flag at Fort Garry.

Companies are being formed for drilling purposes all over the settlement. Col. Dennis is reported to have said that it is not the intention of the Canadian Government to send troops into the settlement but that they will endeavour to form a Militia amongst the settlers—he advises everyone to keep quiet and on no account to fire a shot at this critical moment.

The French broke open the warehouse of the H.B.C. at Fort Garry and helped themselves to Pemmican and some Bags of ball. Dr. Cowan refused to give them the keys and Gov. MacTavish agreed with his refusal—hence the act of breaking open the doors.

Miss McDougall,<sup>1</sup> daughter to the Governor is reported to be at Lower Fort Garry.

James McKay has been with the French the greater part of the day and has started now to Lower Fort Garry with the list of rights claimed by the French and which he is to place before Col. Dennis.

The demands are as nearly as can be understood as follows:

- 1st The right to elect our own legislature.
- 2nd The legislature to have power to pass all laws local to the Territory over the veto of the Executive by a 2/3 vote.

<sup>1</sup> The report was unfounded.

- 3rd No act of the Dominion Parliament (local to this Territory) to be binding on the people until sanctioned by their representatives.
- 4th All Sheriffs—Magistrates—constables &c &c to be elected by the people. A free homestead preemption law.
- 5th A portion of the public lands to be appropriated to the benefit of schools, the building of roads, bridges and parish buildings.
- 6th A guarantee to connect Winnipeg by rail with the nearest line of railroad—the land grant for such road or roads to be subject to the legislature of the Territory.
- 7th For 4 years the public expense of the Territory Civil Military and municipal to be paid out of the Dominion Treasury.
- 8th The military to be composed of the people now existing in the Territory.
- 9th The French and English language to be common in the Legislature and Council and all public documents and acts of legislature to be published in both languages.
- 10th That the Judge of the Superior court speak French and English.
- 11th Treaties to be concluded and ratified between the Government and several tribes of Indians of this Territory calculated to insure peace in the future.
- 12th That all privileges, customs & usages existing at the time of the Transfer be respected.
- 13th That these rights be guaranteed by Mr. McDougall before he be admitted into this Territory.
- 14th If he have not the power himself to grant them then he must get an Act of Parliament passed expressly securing us these rights and until such act be obtained he must stay outside the Territory.
- 15th That we have a full and fair representative in the Dominion Parliament.<sup>1</sup>

Large numbers of French are collecting around Fort Garry and it is expected that a large turnout of these people will take place tomorrow.

Dr. Schultz has to-night about 60 men Canadiens in his house to guard against an attack but the French state they are not going to harm anyone.

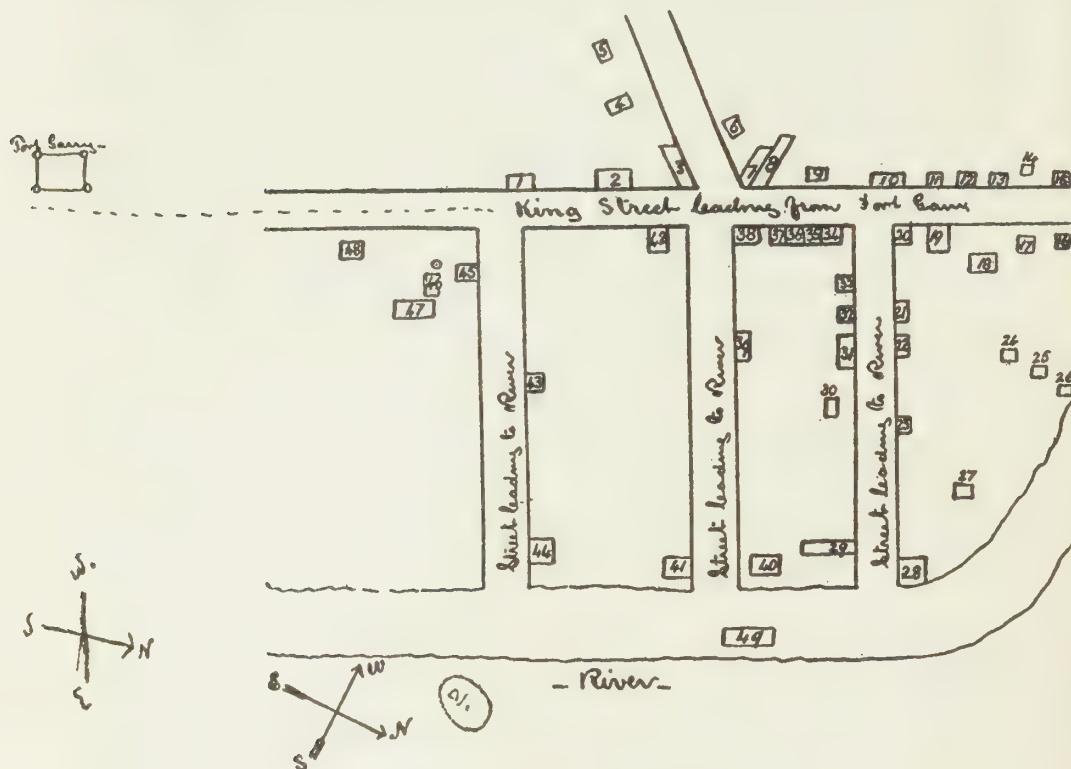
Weather snowing to-day mild.

Mail went out to-night.

<sup>1</sup> The list given agrees substantially, and to a considerable degree verbally, with that printed in Winnipeg over the date of December 4 (P.A.M., Red River Disturbances), except that the item relating to the homestead law is numbered 5 in the printed list, Begg's 15 is numbered 13, and Begg's 12 numbered 14, and his 13 and 14 are made part of a note explaining the failure of the convention to agree on the sending of delegates to McDougall.

## 206 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

Below is given a rough outline of the Town of Winnipeg as it is laid out at present.<sup>1</sup>



Explanation of Town Sketch.

1. Store and Dwelling—Hudson Bay Coy.
2. Store and Dwelling. Wm. Drever Senr.<sup>2</sup>
3. Saloon. H. F. O'Lone.
4. Presbyterian Church.<sup>3</sup>
5. Episcopal Church "Holy Trinity".
6. Butcher Shop and Dwelling—A. R. Gerald.<sup>4</sup>
7. Surveyor Offices and Dwelling. Col. Dennis.

<sup>1</sup> This name, King Street, is not recorded elsewhere but is to be explained by the fact that the highway to the north was called the "King's Road". The street is the present Main Street. The plan may be compared with that published by Begg in *Ten Years in Winnipeg*. The compass direction below the above diagram is somewhat at fault. It should be pivoted  $10^{\circ}$  to  $15^{\circ}$  to the leftward.

<sup>2</sup> William Drever, 1800–1884, Red River merchant, father of William Drever, Jr.; see note 1 on p. 192.

<sup>3</sup> A mission founded by the Reverend John Black, minister of Kildonan, in 1862; the church was built in 1868; later known as Knox Church.

<sup>4</sup> Not otherwise known.



- Photograph Gallery. R. Larson.<sup>1</sup>
8. Store and Dwelling. H. McKenney.
  9. Warehouse. H. McKenney.
  10. Hotel. Geo. Emerling.
  11. Store and Dwelling. John Higgins.<sup>2</sup>
  12. Store and Dwelling. A. Gingras and F. Gingras.<sup>3</sup>
  13. Store and Dwelling. W. H. Lyons.<sup>4</sup>
  14. Butcher Shop. H. Coutu.<sup>5</sup>
  15. House unfinished. John Sutherland.<sup>6</sup>
  16. House unfinished. F. Gingras.
  17. House unfinished. Dr. Bird.
  18. Dwelling. A. G. B. Bannatyne.
  19. Stores. Bannatyne and Begg.
  20. Warehouse. Bannatyne and Begg.
  21. Tin Shop and Dwelling. Jas. H. Ashdown.<sup>7</sup>
  22. Printing Office and Dwelling. "Red River Pioneer Newspaper".
  23. Engine House MacTavish Fire Engine Company No. 1.
  24. Dwelling. Mrs. Ross.<sup>8</sup>
  25. Dwelling. James Ross.
  26. Dwelling. Alex. Logan.
  27. Carriage Shop and Dwelling. T. Lusted.<sup>9</sup>
  28. Dwelling. Andw. McDermott.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ryder Larsen, with Hyme and R. McLaughlin among the first professional photographers of the North-West. Some reproductions of Larsen's photographs appear in the *Canadian Illustrated News*, I, December 18, 1869, pp. 100-101.

<sup>2</sup> John Higgins, said by Begg (*Ten Years in Winnipeg*, p. 9) to have come to the North-West many years before 1869, as pedlar or free trader; became a prominent merchant; partner of W. H. Lyons until 1869, and later senior partner of firm of Higgins, Young and Jackson.

<sup>3</sup> A. Gingras was a *métis* trader at St. Joseph's, North Dakota, his son François Gingras, a plains trader and manager of the Winnipeg branch of the business.

<sup>4</sup> W. H. Lyons, *circa* 1837-1897, a free trader like John Higgins and A. G. B. Bannatyne (see note 4 on p. 162) later wealthy merchant and alderman of Winnipeg.

<sup>5</sup> Henri Coutu, a friend and a relative by marriage of Louis Riel.

<sup>6</sup> John Sutherland, 1821-1899, of East Kildonan, councillor of Assiniboia; Senator, 1871-1899. E. H. Oliver gives 1807 as date of birth.

<sup>7</sup> James H. Ashdown, 1844-1924, Canadian who came to Red River from the United States in 1868; founder of firm of J. H. Ashdown and Company; later alderman and mayor of Winnipeg.

<sup>8</sup> Widow of Alexander Ross.

<sup>9</sup> Thomas Lusted, carriage-maker, later prominent citizen of Winnipeg.

<sup>10</sup> Andrew McDermot, 1791-1881, wealthy Red River trader, one of the earliest (1823) of the "petty" free traders; father-in-law of A. G. B. Bannatyne and Governor Mactavish.

29. Warehouses. Andw. McDermott.
30. Dwelling. James Mulligan.<sup>1</sup>
31. Dwelling and Photograph Gallery. latter by R. McLaughlin.<sup>2</sup>  
Dwellings owned by And. McDermott.
32. Gun Shop. J. C. Kennedy.<sup>3</sup>
33. Saloon. O. Monchamp.<sup>4</sup>
34. Watchmaker and Fancy store. F. C. Mercer.<sup>5</sup>
35. Harness Shop. Stalker and Wright.<sup>6</sup>
36. Warehouse and Carpenter Shop. G. Ellwood.<sup>7</sup>
37. Stationery Store. H. S. Donaldson ;<sup>8</sup>  
up stairs, "Nor Wester" Printing Office.
38. Ruins of House owned by A. McDermott and burnt down some time ago.
39. Hotel Garrett House by Chas. Garrett.<sup>9</sup>
40. Dwelling. Hy. McDermott.<sup>10</sup>
41. Dwelling. Dr. Bird.
42. Hotel. B. Develine.<sup>11</sup>
43. Store and Dwelling. Wm. Drever Jnr.
44. School. Sisters of Charity of St. Boniface.
45. Drug Store. Dr. Schultz (built of brick).
46. House unfinished Dr. Schultz (built of brick).
47. Store and Dwelling. Dr. Schultz.  
○ Flag Staff—Dr. Schultz.
48. Dwelling. Rev. Geo. Young.
49. Steam grist and saw mill. Hy. McDermott.

#### Recapitulation

8 Stores and Dwellings combined.

10 Private Dwellings.

<sup>1</sup> James Mulligan, of the 17th Foot, pensioner in the party of 1850, and Chief Constable in 1869 ; large landowner and later prominent citizen of Winnipeg.

<sup>2</sup> Not otherwise identified.

<sup>3</sup> John C. Kennedy, gunsmith ; see note 2 on p. 198.

<sup>4</sup> Onésime Monchamp, French Canadian ; came to St. Boniface in 1865 ; opened his own public house in Winnipeg shortly after.

<sup>5</sup> Not otherwise identified ; Canadian or sympathizer.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Stalker, not otherwise identified ; and Archibald Wright, 1842-1912, Scots Canadian, came to Red River from the United States in 1869.

<sup>7</sup> George Ellwood, see note 2 on p. 179.

<sup>8</sup> See note 1 on p. 188.

<sup>9</sup> Charles Garrett, hotel keeper, man of all trades, and a character ; a critic of the Company.

<sup>10</sup> Son of Andrew McDermot.

<sup>11</sup> Brian Devlin, 1819-1876, Irish pensioner, Royal Canadian Rifles, and proprietor of eating place, or hotel.

- 2 Churches.
- 2 Saloons.
- 3 Hotels.
- 2 Butcher Shops.
- 2 Photograph Galleries.
- 1 Surveyors Office.
- 5 Warehouses and Stores.
- 1 Tin Shop.
- 2 Printing Offices.
- 1 Carriage Shop.
- 1 Gun Shop.
- 1 Watchmakers Shop.
- 1 Harness Shop.
- 1 Stationery Store.
- 1 School.
- 1 Drug Store.
- 1 Grist and saw Mill.
- 1 Engine House.
- 4 Houses unfinished.
- 1 Burnt ruins.

*Sunday, 5th December, 1869*

There were about four hundred French collected around Fort Garry the reason for which is on account of the numerous rumors that the English speaking population are joining Col. Dennis to force the French to put down their arms—as far as can be ascertained these rumors are untrue.

Everything seems quiet enough otherwise.

Dr. Schultz has a number of Canadiens stationed around his house. The French around the Fort were amusing themselves to-day running foot races. The following bills were posted up and distributed to-day throughout the settlement it is not quite although somewhat similar to the list of rights noted yesterday—it is however the true version.

LIST OF RIGHTS

1. That the people have the right to elect their own Legislature.
2. That the Legislature have the power to pass all laws local to the Territory over the veto of the Executive by a two thirds vote.
3. That no act of the Dominion Parliament (local to the Territory) be binding on the people until sanctioned by the Legislature of The Territory.
4. That all Sheriffs, Magistrates, Constables, School Commissioners etc., be elected by the people.
5. A free Homestead and pre-emption Land law.



6. That a portion of the public lands be appropriated to the benefit of Schools the building of Bridges,—Roads and Public Buildings.
7. That it be guaranteed to connect Winnipeg by Rail with the nearest line of Railroad within a term of five years ; the land grant to be subject to the Local Legislature.
8. That for the term of four years all Military, Civil and Municipal expenses be paid out of the Dominion funds.
9. That the Military be composed of the inhabitants now existing in the Territory.
10. That the English and French languages be common in the Legislature and Courts and that all Public Documents and Acts of the Legislature be published in both languages.
11. That the Judge of the Supreme Court speak the English and French languages.
12. That Treaties be concluded and ratified between the Dominion Government and the several tribes of Indians in the Territory to ensure peace on the frontier.
13. That we have a fair and full representation in the Canadian Parliament.
14. That all privileges, customs and usages existing at the time of the transfer be respected.<sup>1</sup>

All the above articles have been severally discussed by the French and English Representatives without a dissenting voice as the conditions upon which the people of Ruperts Land enter into Confederation. The French Representatives then proposed in order to secure the above rights, that a Delegation be appointed and sent to Pembina to see Mr. McDougall and ask him if he could guarantee these rights by virtue of his commission; and if he could do so that then the French people would join to a man to escort Mr. McDougall into his government seat. But on the contrary if Mr. McDougall could not guarantee such rights, that the Delegates request him to remain where he is, or return till the rights be guaranteed by Act of the Canadien Parliament. The English Representatives refused to appoint Delegates to go to Pembina to consult with Mr. McDougall stating they had no authority to do so from their constituents, upon which the council was dissolved. The meeting at which the above resolutions were adopted was held at Fort Garry on Wednesday Dec. 1 1869.

Weather mild and pleasant.

<sup>1</sup> This is the text of the printed list in P.A.M., Red River Disturbances.

*Monday, 6th December, 1869*

Weather mild and pleasant.

Mail came in early this morning.

The guard from the French was larger than usual in the Town to-day. Two men are reported to have left Dr. Schultz' house early this morning—the men inside of the house pointed their guns at the French outside as if to cover the horsemen when leaving—this exasperated the French who state that they did not intend to interfere with the horsemen.

The excitement in town was very great to-day and serious fears were entertained of a collision between the French and Canadiens in Dr. Schultz' house.

It was felt that if the men could be withdrawn from the Dr.'s the excitement amongst the French would subside. Mr. Riel it is reported assured the Dr. that he would not be interfered with if he would withdraw his men.

Mr. Alexander Begg went up to see Bishop McRae [sic]<sup>1</sup> to see if His Lordship would use any influence he might have with Schultz to induce him to disperse the men at the same time advising that Schultz should get some guarantee for the safety of himself & property. The Bishop declined interfering as he was not on terms of intimacy with the Dr. and as he felt that the Government Park should be protected—that if it fell into the hands of the French it would only serve to prolong the present troubles—he also felt that the proper person to apply to was Col. Dennis but as the Col. was at the Lower Fort an application to that gentleman might not be in time. Mr. Begg therefore left the Bishop, his mission being a failure. Bishop McRae afterwards went and saw Mr. Riel about speaking to Schultz but Mr. Riel's answer was you are too good a man to visit the Dr. *don't go*. Late in the day Mr. Develin Senr.<sup>2</sup> went to Dr. Schultz and asked him what he meant to do under the circumstances—the Dr answered that if Mr. Riel would guarantee that his property would not be destroyed he would withdraw his men. Mr. Develin went to the Fort and saw the council of the French but was told that he came too late. Mr. Patrice Breland<sup>3</sup> has left the council of the French and wiped his hands clean of the whole thing as he believes they (the French) are going too far.

<sup>1</sup> Right Reverend Robert Machray, 1831–1904 ; became Bishop of Rupert's Land in 1866 ; later Archbishop and Primate of Canada.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably Brian Devlin.

<sup>3</sup> Patrice Breland ; see note 1 on p. 166.

The Town was guarded on every side and a number of people turned back from entering it—this is on account of reports that the English intend attacking the French and also to stop despatches to Col. Dennis. One of Mr. Coldwell's printers became frightened and started for Pembina but he was turned back from Stinking River or Rivière de Salle [sic].

W. H. Lyons had his shop closed all day. At a meeting the other day in St. James those present received a letter from Schultz stating that his house had been searched in his absence and that the privacy of his wife's chamber had been tampered with—a little later in the evening another letter was handed in from Miss or Mrs. Drever stating that a number of men had surrounded Dr. Schultz' house and was going to attack it. John Burke<sup>1</sup> who was present said that these things looked strange as he did not see how the lady could tell whether they were going to attack the Dr.'s house or not unless she knew their intentions—he therefore having his horse at the door started for the town and found everything quiet there—it is sensation stories like the above that are doing a great deal of the mischief.

It is said that it is through orders from Col. Dennis that the men [are] in Dr. Schultz' house others say that the Col. has twice ordered the men to disperse. If we escape civil & bloody war it will be providential.

Mr. Scott (H. F. O'Lones barkeeper)<sup>2</sup> and Mr. A. McArthur<sup>3</sup> were taken prisoners this evening for being one of the Schultz armed party—they were lodged in Fort Garry.

*Tuesday, 7th December, 1869*

Weather mild and warm.

Wm. Hallett was taken prisoner by the French this morning he having it is said violated his word that he would not take sides against them—he is in Fort Garry at present.

The following proclamation came out in printed form from Col. Dennis—the printing being done somewhere about Lower Fort Garry—it is supposed by means of a small hand press there is there—

<sup>1</sup> John Bourke, 1823–1887, of St. James ; see note 2 on p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> Alfred H. Scott was O'Lone's bar-keeper ; presumably he is here confused with Thomas Scott, who was arrested at this time ; see note 3 on p. 228.

<sup>3</sup> Alexander McArthur, 1842–1887, a Canadian who came to Red River in 1868 and again in October, 1869 ; later prominent lumberman.



## THE NORTH WEST TERRITORIES

By His Excellency the Honorable William MacDougall, a Member of our L.G. Privy Council for Canada and Companion of our Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories.

To John Stoughton Dennis Esquire, Lieutenant-Colonel Militia Staff Canada Greeting—

Whereas large bodies of armed men have unlawfully assembled on the high road between Fort Garry and Pembina in the Colony or district of Assiniboia and have with force and arms arrested and held as prisoners numerous private and official persons and prevented them from proceeding on their lawful journey and business and have committed other acts of lawless violence in contempt and defiance of the magistrates and local authorities ;

And whereas William MacTavish Esquire Governor of Assiniboia did on the sixteenth day of November last publish and make known to those armed men and all others whom it might concern that the lawless acts aforesaid and which were particularly set forth in his proclamation were “contrary to the remonstrances and protests of the public authorities” and did therein himself protest against each and all of the said unlawful acts and intents and charged and commanded the said armed persons to immediately disperse themselves and peaceably to depart to their habitations or lawful business under the pains and penalties of the law.

And whereas since the issue of the said protest or proclamation certain of the armed men aforesaid have taken possession of the public records and papers at Fort Garry and have seized and held as prisoners public officers or persons having charge of the same and as I am credibly informed still keep unlawful possession of the said records and public property and with force and arms continue to obstruct public officers and others in the performance of their lawful duty and business to the great terror loss and injury of her Majesty's peaceable subjects and in contempt of her royal authority.

And whereas her Majesty by letters patent under the great seal of the Dominion of Canada bearing date the twenty-ninth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine has been graciously pleased to appoint me to be from and after the first day of December instant, Lieutenant Governor of the North West Territories and did thereby authorize and command me to do and execute all things in due manner that should belong to my said command.

Know you that reposing trust and confidence in your courage loyalty fidelity discretion and ability and under and by virtue of the authority in me vested I have nominated and appointed and by these presents do nominate and appoint you the said John Stoughton Dennis to be my Lieutenant and a conservator of the peace in and for the North West Territories and as such to raise, organise, arm, equip and provision a sufficient force within the said Territories

and with the said force to attack, arrest, disarm, or disperse the said armed men so unlawfully assembled and disturbing the public peace and for that purpose and with the force aforesaid to assault, fire upon, pull down, or break into any fort, house, stronghold or other place in which the said armed men may be found—and I hereby authorize you as such Lieutenant and conservator of the peace to hire, purchase, impress and take all necessary clothing, arms, ammunition and supplies and all cattle, horses, waggons, sleighs or other vehicles which may be required for the use of the force to be raised as aforesaid—and I further authorise you to appoint as many officers and deputies under you and to give them such orders and instructions from time to time as may be found necessary for the due performance of the service herein required of you—reporting to me the said appointments and orders as you shall find opportunity for confirmation or otherwise—and I hereby give you full power and authority to call upon all magistrates and peace officers to aid and assist you and to order all or any of the inhabitants of the said North West Territories in the name of her Majesty the Queen to support and assist you in protecting the lives and property of her Majesty's loyal subjects and in preserving the public peace and for that purpose to take, disperse or overcome by force the said armed men and all others who may be found aiding or abetting them in their unlawful acts.

And the said persons so called upon in her Majesty's name are hereby ordered and enjoined at their peril to obey your orders and directions in that behalf, and this shall be sufficient warrant for what you or they may do in the premises so long as this commission remains in force.

Given under my hand and seal at arms at Red River in the said Territories this first day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine and in the thirty-third year of our reign.

By command.

[Signed] WILLIAM MACDOUGALL

[Signed] J. A. N. PROVENCHER

SECRETARY

By virtue of the above commission from the Lieutenant Governor I now hereby call on and order all loyal men of the North West Territories to assist me by every means in their power to carry out the same and thereby restore public peace and order and uphold the supremacy of the Queen in this part of Her Majesty's dominions.

Given under my hand at the Stone Fort Lower Settlement this 6th day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine.

[Signed] J. S. DENNIS

Lieutenant and Conservator of the Peace  
in and for the N.W. Territories.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Proclamation is given in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 130-133; and in E. H. Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 896-899. Two copies are in P.A.M., Red

The above was read aloud by Mr. Riel this morning to his men and tended further to excite them.

The guard around the house of Dr. Schultz and at the avenues to the Town were [sic] larger than yesterday and an attack by the French on Dr. Schultz' house was feared. Mr. Bannatyne, John Burke & Baptiste Morin<sup>1</sup> went down to see Mr. Riel whether anything could be done to prevent bloodshed—but nothing further than the Schultz party laying down their arms and dispersing would be satisfactory. A party of gentlemen including Mr. John Sutherland, Alex. Dawes,<sup>2</sup> John Burke & two of his brothers, Mr. Colin Inkster, H. S. Donaldson, A. G. B. Bannatyne, Alexander Begg, Geo. Emerling, W. H. Lyons and others met in the office of Bannatyne & Begg and determined on going to Schultz and telling him how he was endangering the whole settlement by the course he was pursuing and to ask him to withdraw his men and that they would be security for the safety of his property. The party left for that purpose and did so just in time as Riel with about three hundred French were [sic] coming from the Fort with the intention of driving the Schultz party from the house or obliging them to surrender. The cannons were drawn outside of the Fort ready to play on the house if necessary. Mr. Bannatyne at the head of the party met Riel and told him that they came as mediators and wished to be allowed to speak to Schultz—this was granted. Riel promised protection and on the other hand demanded that Schultz & the whole of his party should surrender unconditionally. Mr. Bannatyne went in with this proposition to the Dr. but that gentleman wished to put certain conditions on the surrender which Mr. Riel would not agree to. Things looked very threatening and the French were fast losing patience. At last Dr. O'Donnell<sup>3</sup> residing with Schultz said that it was better for the party to surrender on the terms offered—"that their lives would be spared"—and set the example by signing his name. All present signed it and then Mr. Riel said he wanted in addition to those on the paper the names of Chas. Garrett and Jas. Mulligan. These gentlemen not being present a guard was despatched to fetch them which was done and their names added to the list.

River Disturbances. The copy in the text is correct except in punctuation and capitalization.

<sup>1</sup> Probably Jean-Baptiste Morin, *dit* Perrault, of Oak Point. <sup>2</sup> Not identified.

<sup>3</sup> John Harrison O'Donnell, M.D., 1844-1912, Irish Canadian; came to Red River in 1869; author of *Manitoba As I Saw It* (Toronto, 1909).



Mrs. Schultz<sup>1</sup> who was not well at the time fainted and went into hysterics. Mrs. Mair<sup>2</sup> was in the house but bore up bravely.

Mr. Snow who was in the house did all in his power to induce the men to refrain from firing on the French outside—he Mr. Snow with Mr. McArthur tried all in their power to get Mr. Riel not to go to any extremes. Mr. Snow was not included on the list he being considered as merely a visitor to Dr. Schultz.

When it was known that all had surrendered and the matter so far ended some of the French felt disappointed that no fight had occurred.

Had a fight taken place there would have been many lives lost as the party inside were desperate and well provided with guns although it is said their ammunition was not plentiful—those outside had the advantage of scattering themselves and had large guns to play upon the houses which would have demolished them certainly.

A sally out was at one time thought of by those inside but they could not have escaped as there were armed riders on horseback who would have overtaken them. There has been a great escape from plunging the whole settlement into war as had blood been shed to-day no one can tell where it would have ended.

Great credit is due Mr. Bannatyne for the skillful [sic] manner in which he brought about this peaceful solution of the difficulty. After all the preliminaries had been gone through with, the following were marched out and taken to Fort-Garry. Below is a copy of the Agreement with the signatures. Communication received this 7th day of December 1869. . . .

Dr. Schultz and men are hereby ordered to give up their arms and surrender themselves. Their lives will be spared should they comply. In case of refusal all the English Halfbreeds and other natives women and children are at liberty to depart unmolested.

[Signed] LOUIS RIEL

Fort Garry 7th Dec. 1869. The surrender will be accepted at or 15 minutes after the order.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. J. C. Schultz, ?-1929, later Lady Schultz; née Anne Campbell Farquharson; came to Red River in 1864; married to Dr. Schultz in 1867, in St. Boniface Cathedral.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Charles Mair, née Elizabeth McKenny, niece of Dr. Schultz. Mrs. J. H. O'Donnell was also in the house.

<sup>3</sup> This document with names is printed in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 164-165.

Joseph Lynch, M.D. <sup>1</sup>		D. U. Campbell.
John Schultz, M.D.		John O'Donnell, M.D. <sup>12</sup>
Arthur Hamilton. <sup>2</sup>		W. F. Hyman. <sup>13</sup>
G. D. McVicar. <sup>3</sup>		James Dawson.
R. P. Meade. <sup>4</sup>		W. J. Davis.
Henry Woodington.		J. B. Haines.
W. J. Allen.		H. Wrightman.
Thos. Lingerard.		L. W. Archibald.
C. E. Palmer.	Wm. Kitson. <sup>8</sup>	George Nicol.
Geo. Bubar.	John Ferguson.	Geo. Miller.
Matthew Davis.	Wm. Spice.	Jas. H. Ashdown. <sup>14</sup>
A. Wright. <sup>5</sup>	Thos. Lusted. <sup>9</sup>	A. W. Graham. <sup>15</sup>
P. McArthur. <sup>6</sup>	James Stewart. <sup>10</sup>	D. Cameron.
Robt. R. Smith.	J. M. Coombs.	J. H. Stocks.
James C. Kent.	A. R. Chisholm.	James Mulligan. <sup>16</sup>
George Fortinay.	John Eccles.	Charles Garrett. <sup>17</sup>
Wm. Graham.	John Ivy.	T. Franklin.
Wm. Nimons. <sup>7</sup>	F. F. Mugridge. <sup>11</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Lynch, M.D., 1841-1894, came to Red River from Ontario in 1869; later practised in Portage la Prairie and Winnipeg.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2 on p. 173.

<sup>3</sup> George D. MacVicar, 1846-1889, Canadian who came to Red River in 1869; later settled in Winnipeg.

<sup>4</sup> R. P. Meade, editor of *The Nor'Wester* in 1869.

<sup>5</sup> See note 6 on p. 208.

<sup>6</sup> Peter McArthur, ?-1936, came to Red River in 1869; worked on Snow road; later prominent lumbermen and steamboat builder and navigator.

<sup>7</sup> William Nimmons of Elora, Ontario, came to Red River in 1868 and again in 1869; travelled, worked on the Snow road.

<sup>8</sup> William Kitson, 1838-1903, English Canadian; came to Red River in 1867; school-teacher in St. James.

<sup>9</sup> See note 9 on p. 207.

<sup>10</sup> See notes 2 and 4 on p. 154.

<sup>11</sup> F. F. Mugridge, or Moggridge, a worker on the Snow road. See note 3 on p. 173.

<sup>12</sup> See note 3 on p. 215.

<sup>13</sup> W. F. Hyman, Canadian, from London, Ontario, who swore to affidavit informing authorities of the rising at St. Norbert, October 22, 1869 (Begg, *Creation of Manitoba*, p. 34).

<sup>14</sup> See note 7 on p. 207.

<sup>15</sup> A. W. Graham, Canadian, from Aldborough, Ontario; author of *Diary of A. W. Graham*, published by the Elgin Historical and Scientific Institute, *Publications*, IV (St. Thomas, 1911). William Graham was his brother. The diary is of considerable interest.

<sup>16</sup> See note 1 on p. 208.

<sup>17</sup> See note 9 on p. 208.

It has not been possible to identify the others. All were Canadians except George F. Fortney, Red River freighter, who was American-born.

Before leaving Dr. Schultz was assured by Mr. Bannatyne and others that all would be done that could be towards taking care of his property. Mrs. Schultz insisted ill as she was in accompanying her husband to the fort. Mrs. Mair and Mrs. O'Donnell did the same. Mrs. Schultz was hauled by her husband in a sleigh to the fort. When they reached Fort Garry the French between 5 & 600 strong fired off their guns in a body as a signal of success.

There is credit due Mr. Riel for the kind and gentlemanly way in which he treated the ladys [sic] of the captive party. He it is said threw off his own coat to wrap around Mrs. Schultz.

J. H. McTavish accountant of Fort Garry offered the married men and their ladies belonging to the party the use of his house and accommodations inside of the fort which was accepted by them and permitted by Mr. Riel. Mr. Mair however was separated from his wife chiefly through his own mismanagement however [sic].

Not a word of exultation was uttered by the French as the prisoners were conveyed to the Fort.

In the evening the following was issued printed by Mr. Coldwell of the Red River Pioneer Office—it was incorrectly printed & issued in an unfinished state at first but afterwards corrected and sent out as follows.

#### DECLARATION

Of the People of Rupert's Land and the North West

---

Whereas It is admitted by all men as a fundamental principle that the public authority commands the obedience and respect of its subjects. It is also admitted that a people, when it has no Government, is free to adopt one form of Government in preference to another to give or to refuse allegiance to that which is proposed. In accordance with the above first principle, the people of this Country had obeyed and respected that authority to which the circumstances surrounding its infancy compelled it to be subject.

A company of adventurers known as the "Hudson Bay Company" and invested with certain powers granted by His Majesty (Charles II) established itself in Rupert's Land and in the North West Territory for trading purposes only. This Company consisting of many persons required a certain constitution. But as there was a question of commerce only their constitution was framed in reference thereto. Yet since there was at that time no government to see to the interests of a people already existing in the country, it became necessary for judicial affairs to have recourse to the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thus inaugurated that species of government



which, slightly modified by subsequent circumstances, ruled this country up to a recent date. Whereas that government thus accepted was far from answering to the wants of the people, and became more and more so as the population increased in numbers, and as the country was developed, and commerce extended, until the present day when it commands a place amongst the Colonies ; and this people ever actuated by the above mentioned principles had generously supported the aforesaid government and gave to it a faithful allegiance ; when contrary to the law of nations, in March 1869 that said Government surrendered and transferred to Canada all the rights which it had or pretended to have in this territory by transactions with which the people were considered unworthy to be made acquainted.

And Whereas it is also generally admitted that a people is at liberty to establish any form of government it may consider suitable to its wants, as soon as the power to which it was subject abandons it or attempts to subjugate it without its consent to a foreign power ; and maintain that no right can be transferred to such foreign power. Now therefore—

1st. We, the Representatives of the people in Council assembled at Upper Fort Garry on the 24th day of November 1869, after having invoked the God of nations, relying on these fundamental moral principles, solemnly declare in the name of our constituents and in our own names, before God and man, that from the day on which the Government we always respected abandoned us—by transferring to a strange power the sacred authority confided to it—the people of Rupert's Land and the North West became free and exempt from all allegiance to the said Government.

2nd. That we refuse to recognise the authority of Canada which pretends to have a right to coerce us and impose upon us a despotic form of government, still more contrary to our rights and interests as British subjects than was that Government to which we had subjected ourselves through necessity up to a recent date.

3rd. That by sending an expedition on the 1st of November ult. charged to drive back Mr. William McDougall and his companions coming in the name of Canada to rule us with the rod of despotism without a previous notification to that effect we have but acted conformably to that sacred right which commands every citizen to offer energetic opposition to prevent his country being enslaved.

4th. That we continue and shall continue to oppose with all our strength the establishing of the Canadian authority in our country under the announced form. And in case of persistence on the part of the Canadian Government to enforce its obnoxious policy upon us by force of arms we protest beforehand against such an unjust and unlawful course and we declare the said Canadian Government responsible before God and men for the innumerable evils which may be caused by so unwarrantable a course.

Be it known, therefore, to the world in general and to the Canadian Government in particular that as we have always heretofore successfully defended our country in frequent wars with the neighbouring tribes of Indians who are now in friendly relations with us we are firmly resolved in future not less than in the past to repel all invasions from whatsoever quarter they may come.

And furthermore we do declare and proclaim in the name of the people of Rupert's Land and the North West that we have on the said 24th day of November 1869 above mentioned established a Provisional Government and hold it to be the only and lawful authority now in existence in Rupert's Land and the North West which claims the obedience and respect of the people. That meanwhile we hold ourselves in readiness to enter into negotiations with the Canadian Government as may be favourable for the good government and prosperity of this people.

In support of this declaration relying on the protection of Divine Providence we mutually pledge ourselves on oath our lives our fortunes and our sacred honor to each other.

Issued at Fort Garry this 8th day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine.

[Signed] JOHN BRUCE President  
LOUIS RIEL Secretary<sup>1</sup>

The incorrect copy of the above came out to-day but as the particulars of this days transactions was [sic] not written in this book till the 8th hence the correct copy was given and this accounts for the 8th being given in the declaration entered in this Journal on the 7th.

T. Lusted one of the Schultz armed party escaped before the prisoners was [sic] marched off and is now on his way to the Stone Fort.

A band of about forty armed men left to-night for Pembina to turn Mr. McDougall back once more from the H.B.C. post there to American soil it being reported that he has taken up his quarters in that Fort.

Mail went out to-night.

This evening Bishop McRae wrote to Mr. Bannatyne in favor of the men in Schultz houses laying down their arms and dispersing ; his advice as to the manner of bringing this about came too late.

*Wednesday, 8th December, 1869*

Weather mild but blowing somewhat.

Mr. Bannatyne & Alex. Begg went over and saw that Dr. Schultz place

<sup>1</sup> The same text is given in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 167-170, and also in E. H. Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, 904-906. See No. XIII below.



LOUIS RIEL (1844-1885)

This picture from the Public Archives of Canada is dated 1874, and the general appearance of Riel, and his moustache, are the same as in a portrait of Riel and his council taken in 1869-1870.





was safe the latter then took down provisions to the prisoners at Fort Garry. Geo. Emerling and B. Develin did the same. Nothing has transpired as to the fate of the prisoners—they are far from being comfortable being crowded up in small rooms and strictly guarded.

Mr. Snow Road Superintendent has received two weeks notice from Riel to leave the settlement.

Mr. Snow was endeavouring to-day to obtain the release of Mr. Hamilton & Mr. Mair on the grounds that they were not enrolled amongst the men in Schultz house but merely visitors and had put their names on the list by mistake—he did not succeed to-day. A great many of the French returned home to-day.

It is reported that the settlers down the settlement towards the Stone Fort have disbanded their companies but have arranged to meet at a moment's warning if necessary.

Dr. Bown editor of the *Nor Wester* left the town some time ago in disguise and is now at the Stone Fort and there is a report that Riel is going to send a guard of men to that place to arrest him. There is also talk of their arresting Mr. James Ross. A guard of French are in Schultz house. Mr. Snow wished particularly to get into Schultz house to-day for certain papers of his, but Mr. Develin who is left in charge would not allow him.

Mrs. Stewart wife of the prisoner went to Riel and begged to be allowed to keep possession of one of Schultz houses as her husband had bought it from the Dr. and that it was partly paid for on the plea that she was a poor woman supporting her children. Riel granted her request.

*Thursday, 9th December, 1869*

The following Proclamation came out from Mr. McDougall.

#### The North West Territories

##### Proclamation

By His Excellency the Honorable William Macdougall, a member of Her Majesty's Privy Council of Canada and Companion of the most honorable Order of the Bath, Lieutenant Governor of the North-west Territories &c, &c, &c.

Whereas her majesty the Queen by letters patent under the great seal of the Dominion of Canada bearing date the twenty-ninth day of September in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty nine in the thirty third

year of her majesty's reign, has been graciously pleased to constitute and appoint me on from and after the day to be named by her majesty for the admission of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory into the union or Dominion of Canada to be Lieutenant Governor in and over the North West Territories during her majesty's pleasure and did thereby authorize and empower and require and command me on from and after the day aforesaid to do and execute all things in due manner that shall belong to my said command and the trust reposed in me—according to the several powers and instructions granted or appointed me by that her majesty's commission and the act of the [sic] Parliament passed in the thirty second year of her majesty's reign intituled an act for the temporary government of Rupert's Land and the Northwestern Territory when united with Canada and the instructions given me with such commission or by such further instructions as may hereafter be given in respect of the North West Territories and the government thereof by her majesty's Governor-General in Council under the sign manual or through one of her majesty's Privy Council of Canada according to such laws as are now and shall hereafter be in force within the said North West Territories. And whereas her majesty has declared and named the first day of December instant as the day for the admission of Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory into the union and Dominion of Canada and whereas by virtue and in pursuance of the British North American Act of 1867 the Ruperts Land Act of eighteen hundred and sixty eight the said act for the temporary government of Ruperts Land and the North Western Territory when united with Canada and the said declaration and order of her Majesty—Ruperts Land and the North Western Territory have been admitted into union with, and have now become part of the dominion [sic] of Canada and are henceforth to be known as the North West Territories.

Now know ye that I have thought fit to issue this Proclamation to make known her majesty's said appointment to all officers, magistrates, ministers, and subjects of her majesty and others within the said North West Territories and I do hereby require and command that all and singular the public officers and functionaries holding office in Rupert's Land and the North Western Territory at the time of their admission into the union as aforesaid, excepting the public officer or functionary at the head of the administration of affairs do continue in the execution of their several and respective offices duties places and employments until otherwise ordered by me under the authority of the said last mentioned act and I do hereby further require and command that all her majesty's loving subjects and all others whom it may concern do take notice hereof and govern themselves accordingly.

Given under my hand and seal at arms at Red River in the said Territories the Second day of December in the year of our Lord one thousand eight



hundred and sixty nine and in the thirty-third year of Her Majesty's reign.

[Signed] WILLIAM MACDOUGALL

By command

[Signed] J. A. N. PROVENCHER  
Secretary.<sup>1</sup>

A movement to-day was on foot to send provisions down to the prisoners in Fort Garry—several citizens contributed but the act of kindness seemed to be not appreciated by some of the prisoners—Mr. John Sutherland, Mr. Alex. Dawes, Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne and others met Mr. Riel in Mr. McKenney's store, for the purpose of ascertaining the fate of the prisoners and if possible to get them parolled—they also spoke about the prospects and endeavoured to find out the intentions of the French. Mr. Riel could not give an answer regarding the prisoners—he stated that he was determined to stick to the Provisional Government and desired the union of the entire settlement in supporting it. He declared as the intention of the French that they would not treat at all with Mr. Macdougall but were willing to negotiate with Canada. On searching Dr. Schultz' house last night there were found hid in the bed on which Mrs. Schultz was lying the following

2-14 shooting Rifles

1 Breach loader

5 6" Shooter Revolvers

1 Double barrel pistol

100 Cartridges

A great many arms and a large quantity of ammunition was found concealed in every direction and manner inside of the three houses belonging to Schultz.

Weather mild and pleasant.

Mail arrived to-day not much news in the newspapers regarding this country the tone of the Canadien papers seems to be on the side of the people of this country getting their rights.

Towards evening Mr. Bannatyne received the following letter—

*Mr. Bannatyne  
rec'd a note from  
O'H(?) to come  
over to Dr.  
Schultz & see  
what Mrs. S  
during her  
confinement had  
been delivered  
of.  
She had been  
protesting to be  
so (very) sick  
& near her  
confinement.<sup>2</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> In Begg, *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 118-120, and in C.S.P., 1870 (12). The above substantially agrees with the printed copies.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

Lower Fort Garry  
Dec. 9th 1869

A. G. B. Bannatyne Esq,  
Winnipeg.

Dear Mr. Bannatyne,

I hope the enclosed will satisfy the French party of my desire not to see the country made desolate upon a question which I am convinced admits of a peaceful solution.

Be good enough to make it known to the parties in arms—If I can contribute in any way to bring about a settlement I shall be glad to do so. The paper will be printed and distributed to-day.

Believe me

Dear Sir,

Yours etc.

[Signed] J. S. DENNIS

The following was the proclamation enclosed

Lower Fort Garry Red River Settlement

December 9th 1869

To all whom it may concern

By certain printed papers of late put in circulation by the French party communication with the Lieutenant Governor is indicated with a view to laying before him alleged rights on the part of those now in arms.<sup>1</sup>

I think that course very desirable and that it would lead to good results.

Under the belief that the party in arms are sincere in their desire for peace and feeling that to abandon for the present the call on the loyal to arms would in view of such communication relieve the situation of much embarrassment and so contribute to bring about peace and save the country from what will otherwise end in ruin and desolation,—I now call on and order the loyal party in the North West Territories to cease further action under the appeal to arms made by me : and I call on the French party to satisfy the people of their sincerity in wishing for a peaceful ending of all these troubles by sending a deputation to the Lieutenant Governor at Pembina without unnecessary delay.

Given under my hand at the Lower Fort Garry this 9th day of December 1869.

[Signed] J. S. DENNIS

Lieut. and Conservator of the Peace in and for  
the North West Territories.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The List of Rights of December 4 ; see note 1 on p. 205.

<sup>2</sup> In Begg, *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 177-179.

This evening the French party arrested a Canadian named Parker<sup>1</sup> in Geo. Emerlings Hotel—he had been working on the Lake of the Woods road and had come in armed—it appears he hid the arms in Emerling's back yard on hearing of the troubles—some one informed on him—the arms were found by the guard and Parker was taken from his bed and taken to Fort Garry.

The guards were on the look out for other suspected persons.

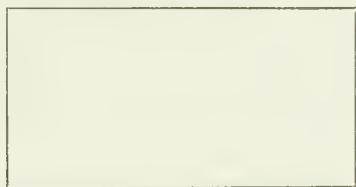
The French to-day seized all the available arms in town not with a hostile intention but to prevent their being used against them by the Dennis party—they also took eleven kegs [of] powder from W. H. Lyons giving him a receipt for it.

*Friday, 10th December, 1869*

Weather mild and foggy.

It was the opinion of certain residents in the town that the settlement would have to go in for the Provisional government for self protection. Some steps were taken towards calling a meeting to consider the subject. News came in that the Canadian party were endeavouring to raise the Sioux Indians to come down on the settlement—the report is not believed.

The French to-day hoisted the Provisional Government flag<sup>2</sup> as below



and fired off a volley of small arms and salutes from the cannon at Fort Garry—the guard at Dr. Schultz house returned the salute.

After several vollies had been fired at the Fort and the band of St. Boniface under the leadership of Father Dugast<sup>3</sup> had played several tunes there—a party with the band proceeded to the town and serenaded Genl. Malmoras the American Consul. Three cheers were given for the Provisional Government—three for the leaders and three for the band—

<sup>1</sup> George Parker, not otherwise identified, but see note 5 on p. 316 and No. 1 below.

<sup>2</sup> It is to be deplored that Begg left his sketch of the flag blank, as it is variously described. The weight of testimony is that the symbols on the white field were the fleur de lys and shamrock.

<sup>3</sup> The Reverend Georges Dugas, 1833-1928; historian; then director of St. Boniface College; came to Red River in 1866. See Nos. IV and XXXII below.



followed by three groans for Mulligan—late chief of police now a prisoner  
 & others<sup>1</sup> at Fort Garry. Mr. Riel addressed the French at Fort Garry and in the  
 course of his speech hoped his men were all loyal to the Queen.  
 Thus was inaugurated the Provisional Government of Red River under  
 Bruce & Riel. How long it will last remains to be proved.

*Saturday, 11th December, 1869*

Weather mild and foggy.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day. The Provisional Government  
 topic<sup>2</sup> seems to be the token of conversation—but it does not appear likely that  
 the English side will fall into it readily. It is rumoured that Col. Dennis  
 when he finds himself powerless will leave the Stone Fort and rejoin Mr.  
 McDougall. Wm. Drever Jnr. has hid himself somewhere but no one  
 seems to know in what direction he has gone—he has lately sided a good  
 deal with the Schultz party and no doubt dreads the consequences now.  
 Mr. Riel sent for Mr. Bannatyne to-night to speak to him about being  
 Postmaster under the Provisional Government. In the course of  
 conversation Mr. Riel disavowed any Fenian element as influencing the  
 French party and said the Provisional Government was only meant as a  
 basis for treating with Canada—he further said that he intended to issue  
 another Proclamation avowing the purposes of the Provincial [sic]  
 Government—he also said that when that was fully formed both sides  
 uniting in it he would be glad if Gov. MacTavish or Judge Black would  
 accept being the head of it. Mr. Bannatyne said he would require till  
 Monday to consider whether he could accept office. Word was brought  
 in to-day that Mr. McDougall was preparing to leave Pembina for  
 Canada.

*Mr. Riel it  
 appears said to  
 Mr. Bannatyne  
 that he would  
 give till  
 Monday—it  
 must be done!  
 Mr. Riel stated  
 at this time also  
 that he expected  
 commissioners  
 from Canada<sup>3</sup>*

The guards sent to drive him back on American Territory found that  
 he was not at the H.B.C. post but had merely come over to British soil  
 on the night of the 1st Dec. to take possession in the name of Canada  
 and had gone immediately back over the lines. The guard left some men  
 in charge of Pembina Post.

Mail went out to-night.

*Sunday, 12th December, 1869*

Weather pleasant bright and cheerful not too cold.

Everything was quiet and orderly to-day. Mr. Riel called for a fresh

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

guard to relieve those now in Fort Garry. He made his call at the door of the cathedral of St. Boniface and it was responded to by the French. Mr. Bannatyne asked Gov. MacTavish's advice as to what he should do regarding the Post Office and the French party—whether he should accept the office of postmaster under them—and if not—should they come for the letters and papers now in the post office. The Governor said he thought that before accepting office he (Mr. Bannatyne) should be fully informed of the intentions of the Provisional Government and that the letters & papers now in the Post Office are private and sacred property. Mr. Bannatyne agreed with the views of the Governor but as he had taken office under the H.B.C. rule he thought it best to consult with him. What Mr. Bannatyne intends to do is not known but he will be guided a good deal by his desire for peace in the country as well as the sacredness of his charge as postmaster.

*Monday, 13th December, 1869*

Weather mild and pleasant.

Mail came in this morning.

It is rumored that the French arrested a half witted old man named Jos. Sabiston<sup>1</sup> usually employed about Fort Garry because it is said he has been carrying communications against the French.

They also arrested Mr. W. G. Fonseca<sup>2</sup>—some say because he has been carrying or has been the medium for carrying communication for McDougall—others say that it is because he went security for Dr. O'Donnell that he would not take part against the French—O'Donnell was taken in Schultz house and therefore Mr. Fonseca forfeited his word and was taken prisoner.

It is reported that Mr. McDougall cannot leave Pembina at present on account of his son having broken his arm and being unable to be removed but it is expected he (Mr. McDougall) will leave for Canada as soon as his son is better.

Col. Dennis has left Lower Fort Garry for Pembina via Portage La Prairie—it is said he left early Saturday morning last.

Dr. Bown editor "Nor' Wester" has disappeared mysteriously from the Stone Fort—it is supposed he also has left for Pembina.

Col. Dennis has left a great many bills unpaid behind him some of them

<sup>1</sup> Not identified, except as a servant of E. L. Barber. See No. x below.

<sup>2</sup> William Gomez Fonseca, 1823-1905, West Indian; came to Winnipeg in 1860; later prominent merchant.

due poor men who feel it very much. It is said there are over sixty prisoners in the Fort, thirty eight of whom are now confined in the jail at the court house the balance are in the late bedrooms of the H.B.C. officers of the Fort. Dr. Schultz is the only one who is now allowed to be with his wife—all the other married men are with the rest of the prisoners confined. Mr. Meade co-editor of *Nor Wester* is unaccountably allowed to remain in Dr. Cowan's house.

*Tuesday, 14th December, 1869*

Weather still mild and pleasant.

The following are the names of those parties arrested since the surrender of Schultz' party for being implicated with it.

\* Stewart Mulkins (Col. Dennis nephew)<sup>1</sup>

† Charles Stodgall.<sup>2</sup>

\* Wm. Hallet.

† John Hallett.

\* Geo. Klyne.

\* Frank La Rose.

† Charles Mair.

\* — Scott.<sup>3</sup>

‡ W. G. Fonseca.

† F. C. Mercer.

‡ Geo. Parker.

‡ John Latimer.

‡ Geo. Brandon.

\* arrested before the surrender.

† arrested at the time of surrender.

‡ arrested after the surrender.

The following are supposed to be prisoners but not known to be so for certain—

John B. Harris.

Geo. A. Hill.

John B. Harrington—*mistake gone to Canada.*

Thomas Baxter.

<sup>1</sup> And member of survey party.

<sup>2</sup> It has not been possible to identify most of the names on this list other than those already noted. Frank Larose was presumably the Larose whose house McDougall rented in Pembina.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Scott.



James Deffrey.  
Wildon Bartlet.  
Alex. Marple.

Mail went out to-day.

W. G. Fonseca was released this evening from confinement.

Everything about the town was very quiet to-day. There is a report that the French say there are some entries in the government Books in their possession which ought not to be there—there is little credence given to this.

The Prisoners in the Fort and Court House are kept strictly watched—no parcels being allowed into them without first being searched. No letters nor papers are allowed to be given to nor taken from them.

*Wednesday, 15th December, 1869*

It is reported to-day that on Sunday morning last after the people of St. Andrews heard that Col. Dennis had left the Stone Fort and all the men had been withdrawn from there—they held a meeting of the Committee of Defence after service in the St. Andrews Church—and adjourned to meet at the Fort the same evening. It was then decided that Col. Dennis having left the Powder and ammunition and arms unguarded it was their duty to keep them safe—and to prevent the necessity of keeping a guard at the Fort they resolved that each of the Committee should take and place in safety a part of the said ammunition and arms—in this way the following was distributed in different parts of St. Andrews parish where it could be got at readily in case of need.

260—66  $\frac{2}{3}$  (ozs) kegs gunpowder

120 Cases Ball ammunition besides a lot of arms

The nine pounder gun of the Fort was also placed away privately in a place of safety.

The French now help themselves to what they want in the Fort in the way of goods etc. of which they say they keep a strict account.

It is feared that American influence is at work in the movement whether successfully or not is not at present known.

James McKay who has gone to St. Jo. is in danger of being captured by the Americans who have a warrant for him for complicity in the Sioux outbreak of 1862 and other times.

Rumors are afloat that the Americans are to build a fort at Pembina without delay \$125,000 having been appropriated by Congress for that

purpose. A force of American soldiers are expected immediately at that place.

No word as yet of Mr. McDougall's having left Pembina—but some of French say that something is expected to take place Friday next which will bring things to a crisis—what it is cannot be learned at present—but probably it has some connection with McDougall's leaving—a courier having been despatched to Pembina to report.<sup>1</sup> Kildonan Parish people are very much concerned as to the best steps to take in the present affairs—if they would not make themselves liable for previous acts of the French and if the prisoners at Fort Garry were released it is thought probable that they might join the Provisional Government. No more word about the postmaster's position although Mr. Riel stated to-day that Mr. Bannatyne at present occupies no position as postmaster.

No knowledge as to what is to be done with the prisoners is yet learned. Judge Black—Acting Governor of Assiniboia in absence or sickness of Governor MacTavish refuses to sign landing certificates for goods unless they bear the signature of the collector that the duty has been paid in Red River. Much confusion is felt about this as people do not know who to pay the duty to, Mr. Goulait having been removed from the office of collector by the French and no one is acting in his stead. The Provisional Government unless with the co-operation of the entire settlement will be a mixed and unsuccessful affair and may result in trouble. Weather very mild and pleasant.

Everything remains quiet—the property of Dr. Schultz is kept guarded and not interfered with by anyone as well as the Government Pork of which so much has been said.

*Thursday, 16th December, 1869*

Weather still continues mild and pleasant.

Mail arrived to-day.

Grinchuckle a Montreal illustrated comic-paper contains a few laughable sketches of Mr. McDougall's retreat at Pembina.

A courier arrived at Fort Garry from Pembina with news of some kind for Mr. Riel—what it is has not yet transpired.

Mr. Riel has withdrawn the guard from the office of the "Nor Wester" and placed Winship<sup>2</sup> one of Dr. Bown's printers in charge—it is supposed

<sup>1</sup> McDougall left Pembina on December 18.

<sup>2</sup> George B. Winship, American, came to Winnipeg as printer with Dr. Schultz in 1868.

that the French mean to start a paper in their interests—but this is not known as a certainty.

In the meantime the Red River Pioneer is not permitted to be issued until peace is restored in the Settlement.

It is reported that the French intercepted a letter from Mr. McDougall to Col. Dennis in which the latter is commanded to use any means burning and destroying to bring the former into the Settlement.

The American residents amongst whom are Major Robinson<sup>1</sup> and H. S. Donaldson seem to be interesting themselves a good deal in the French movement—something must be at the bottom of this.

The following letter was received to-day.

Pembina Dec. 14 1869

My Dear Begg

You will see statement on Red River affairs of one T. W. Boddy<sup>2</sup> (a Canadian) in the St. Paul papers that go down to-morrow. First was Sanford—a splendid liar and now comes Boddy—that seems to embody everything in the nature of falsehood. It cannot be possible that all Canadians are liars—for yourself and many other good men are from that puffy little Dominion. But pray tell me if you can how it is that it seems utterly impossible for a Canadian going from Winnipeg to Canada to pass St. Paul without stuffing the papers with the most improbable and truly wonderful statement on Red River matters. This morning very early two of McDougall's swampy braves passed here with dispatches for His Excellency. All this day he has had them stowed away in the cock loft of his castle—and I presume will start them off between this and morning. Young Merchant who has been working at McDougalls states that His Excellency showed a spencer Rifle to his Christian warriors explaining its movements &c. and enquired if he should arm their tribes with such guns—whether they would fight the French—they said they would. How do you like your Governor's organizing (from neutral soil) wars upon a friendly people?

Tomorrow I shall take Merchant's sworn statement on the subject.

Yours truly,

STUTSMAN<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Major Henry M. Robinson, American, later editor of *The New Nation*; author of *The Great Fur Land* (New York, 1879).

<sup>2</sup> T. W. Boddy has not been identified; possibly the report was that by "a Canadian gentleman" in the *St. Paul Daily Press*, December 5, which declared the troubles were subsiding. See also *St. Paul Pioneer*, December 5, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> This characteristic communication is not printed in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*. On the matter of using the Indians, see Introduction. The only two affidavits sworn were to the effect that McDougall attempted to enlist men on American



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It is said that McDougall & Cameron have quarrelled and that if he (McDougall) left Pembina Cameron would be allowed to shift for himself.

*Friday, 17th December, 1869*

Something was expected to occur to-day to throw some light on the future movements of the French but the day passed off quietly enough without anything of importance happening.

Weather colder but pleasant.

News came in to-day that Dennis paid off his men at the Portage by orders on Dr. Schultz store at that place.

It is also said that Schultz when he was besieged in his house sent up for aid to the Portage and also a lot of old grey blankets to make leggings for those who should come to his assistance—of course the Canadian Government will have to pay for the blankets. Word arrived that McDougall was getting sleds made in Pembina and that he was going to attempt returning to Canada via Fort William—this seems preposterous. Excitement is dying off a good deal in the Settlement—but a deep solicitude is felt by many for the future. It looks more and more every day as if the whole people would have to go in for the Provisional Government not only as a means of protection but also to be in a position to claim their rights. Some talk of Governor MacTavish accepting the head of affairs if it was the voice of the whole people and Gov. McDougall had left Pembina—however this is merely surmise as Mr. MacTavish is not in a fit state of health to take any active part in the present difficulties.

An attempt was made to-day by R. C. Budick<sup>1</sup> and Geo. Emerling to obtain the release of Dr. O'Donnell on the plea that the town wanted his services in a medical point of view. The petition is likely to be granted to-morrow it is said.

*Saturday, 18th December, 1869*

Weather cold and frosty.

Snow's warehouse at Pointe du Chêne (Oak Point) is in danger of or has

soil ; none that he attempted to incite the Indians. U.S.N.A., Department of State, Miscellaneous Letters, 1870, Part 2, N. E. Nelson to Hamilton Fish, February 24, 1870.

<sup>1</sup> Richard C. Burdick, 1834-1902, American ; clerk in retail store of the Hudson's Bay Company in Winnipeg, 1869 ; later resident of St. Paul, Minnesota.

been broken into by Indians and a guard has been asked to watch over it. Major Henry Robinson is about starting a newspaper in the French interests in the office of the Nor Wester. No doubt he will bring out a spirited sheet.

John Bruce who has been dangerously ill is recovering and he is now thought to be out of danger.

It is reported that only a very few Sioux Indians spoke of coming from the Portage—but it is certain that Dr. Schultz did his best to get a force from the Portage to his assistance when he was besieged. Dr. O'Donnell is still a prisoner.

It is not known whether Col. Dennis has yet joined Mr. McDougall. Mail went out to-night.

Everything quiet through the settlement.

It is reported that some French who have gone for fish to Lake Winnipeg are likely to be attacked by the Swampy Indians near the Indian Settlement. Mrs. Schultz is not keeping well—no doubt the excitement has worked a good deal on her system.

It is now currently supposed by a great many that the Queen's Proclamation is not yet out—and that the one issued some time ago and which has been considered the real thing is nothing more nor less than [a] copy of McDougall's Commission.

*Sunday, 19th December, 1869*

Weather cold clear and frosty.

It is reported from word received from Pembina, that a part of Mr. McDougall's party consisting of Provencher and Cameron have left on their return to Canada<sup>1</sup> and that Mr. McDougall leaves to-morrow. Mr. Riel who left yesterday morning or Friday with a guard for Oak Point to look after the government property at that place has not yet returned. A man named Thos. Johnson was found yesterday near his own door frozen. At first it seemed as if he had frozen to death—but on closer examination it turned out that he had been shot. It appears he and some others had been drinking together the night before at Peter Pruden's house which ultimately resulted in quarrelling and it is supposed

<sup>1</sup> This was not entirely so ; Provencher remained at Pembina until the end of February, 1870 ; the remainder of the party, except Captain Cameron, had left on December 18 ; Cameron followed on January 3, 1870, in company with Dr. Charles Tupper.

in Johnson being shot. The perpetrator of the deed is not known.<sup>1</sup>

Everything quiet to-day.

Dr. O'Donnell was permitted to leave his prison in company with a guard to-day for the purpose of attending on the children of Mr. Burdick who are ill—after attending to the case the Dr. returned to prison but another effort is to be made to get him out on parol [sic] on account of there not being sufficient medical assistance in the town.

*Monday, 20th December, 1869*

Weather still continues very cold but pleasant.

Mail came in this morning.

A petition was handed round this morning and which [sic] was signed by all the residents in the town asking for the release of Dr. O'Donnell for medical reasons as the town was in need of proper medical attendance.

Another report from Pembina and which is a correct one is to the effect that Gov. McDougall and party with the exception of Messrs. Cameron and Provencher left for Canada last Friday—the latter gentlemen intend it is said to remain in Pembina for some weeks. Cameron is very anxious to visit the settlement as a large portion of his household stuff is in the hands of Mr. W. G. Fonseca and he (Cameron) wishes to look after it.

H. M. Robinson assisted by Col. Stutsman who is coming to reside amongst us is about starting a newspaper in the interests of the French. Robinson has been trying to find Dr. Bown to make arrangements with him for the use of his Press. If he cannot find the Dr., Robinson is going to take the use of the printing office and contents from Mr. Riel and will then pay Dr. Bown whatever is fair for the use thereof as soon as he sees him. It is expected that the first sheet of the new paper will be out next week in time for the mail.

It is reported to-day that Ryder Larson is supposed to have shot Johnson—another report lays the blame on one of the Prudens<sup>2</sup> but of course it is all surmise these men having been in his company about the time he was shot.

Mr. Bannatyne received a letter from Col. Dennis to-day in which he

<sup>1</sup> See *New Nation*, January 7, 1870, for an account of this crime.

<sup>2</sup> There was both a Peter Pruden and a John Peter Pruden, Chief Trader, in St. Andrew's, members of an extensive and well known family.



asserts that the men were in Schultz house without his orders and that he repeatedly ordered them away from there.<sup>1</sup>

There is a full meeting of the council of the French to-day and it is supposed that the fate of the prisoners is being decided. Some think that a portion of them will be put across the lines [sic] and that the balance will be parolled.

John Bruce President of the French who was reported some time ago as not being likely to recover from his sickness was out to-day and took his place at the head of the Council board.

It is not known yet what Mr. Riel accomplished at Oak Point in connection with the government goods.

The following letter was received to-day.

Pembina Dec. 18th 1869

Dear Begg,

McDougall broke camp this morning and is now en route for Abercrombie.

For the use of Washington Papers please procure and mail to me copies of all the recent Proclamations, Declarations etc. issued and promulgated in your settlement, viz.

Proclamation of Gov. McTavish.

„ Mr. McDougall.

„ Deputy Gov. Dennis.

Declaration of President Bruce.

Please do not neglect this. All quiet at Pembina.

Yours,

[Signed] STUTSMAN<sup>2</sup>

*Tuesday, 21st December, 1869*

This has been considered the coldest day of the season yet felt here. The coroners inquest decided against R. Larson in the shooting case of Johnson and report has it that Larson has fled the country—this however is not known for a certainty.

From news brought in by yesterday's mail it looks very probable that the Queen's Proclamation regarding this country is not yet out and that McDougall had copies of his Commission circulated purporting to be the real Proclamation. The prisoners on hearing this felt very

<sup>1</sup> As was the case: C.S.P., 1870, pp. 114 and 119.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is not in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*. The request for the "Declaration of President Bruce", presumably the Declaration of December 8, is an indication that Stutsman had nothing to do with its composition.

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downhearted on the subject—and many people in the settlement are beginning to feel themselves sold.

Col. Dennis has left all his business in an unfinished and unsatisfactory state.

Riel had the first case of judicial trial to-day. Mrs. Rodway against a near neighbour of her Mrs. Meeken for assault the result of the trial has not been heard to-day.<sup>1</sup>

It is said Dr. Schultz considers himself sold by the McDougall party.

Jas. Ross has offered his services to the French party through some of their council[l]ors. He is said to have declared that he had made a mistake in opposing them and that if they would now trust him he would make up for it. How are you turncoat? It is thought that the Balance of the settlement will now go in for the Provisional Government very soon.<sup>2</sup> Mail went out this evening.

Mrs. Mair is not allowed now to see her husband—this it is said has been brought on by her abuse of the French guards around the Fort.

*Wednesday, 22nd December, 1869*

Weather very cold and frosty.

Today a bargain was made between Mr. Coldwell and Messrs. Robinson and Stutman [sic] for the Printing Press type &c. of the Red River Pioneer Newspaper for the sum of £550. The plan previously thought of by Robinson to take the use of the Nor Wester office is now abandoned and the coming newspaper to be issued in the interests of the French is to be issued from Mr. Coldwell's office.<sup>3</sup> He Mr. Coldwell has merely sold the Press Type and fixtures but not the proposed circulation and advertisements of the Pioneer. Mr. Coldwell is retained merely in the capacity of printer but does not undertake to write for the new paper.

Col. Stutsman is expected every day from Pembina.

Mr. James Ross is said to have gone to the Council Chamber of the French while under the influence of liquor and made an ass of himself—it is also said that while there he took the oath of allegiance to the Provisional Government.

<sup>1</sup> That is, the Provisional Government was assuming more of the functions of government.

<sup>2</sup> An illustration of Begg's hostility to Ross ; if the Settlement were to support the Provisional Government, why should not Ross ?

<sup>3</sup> The new newspaper, that is, was to be edited by Robinson in the interest of the French party, but not as a government organ.

This evening Mr. Riel went into the office of the H.B.C. and demanded the cash from Mr. McTavish the accountant. This McTavish refused and also refused to give up the keys of the safe. Mr. Riel then having a guard of men with fixed bayonets took and searched Mr. McTavish and extracted the keys from one of his pockets. It was a long time before they could open the safe Mr. McTavish refusing to show the secret—at one time they threatened to blow the safe open. At last O'Donohue [sic] succeeded in opening the box and took the money from it and counted it. They then took safe and all away with them and Mr. Riel stated that if there was anything wrong with the cash that every H.B.C. officer would be obliged to leave the Fort by six O'Clock to-morrow evening. It is said that the French are seeking after the money which they say is due by H.B.C. to Government of Assiniboia.

*Thursday, 23rd December, 1869*

Weather still continues very cold sharp and frosty with a high wind.

Mr. O'Donoghue is reported to be about leaving for New York City but what his mission is there no one outside the French council knows at present.

The news of the seizure of the H.B.C. money caused a good deal of excitement to-day. It is said that Mr. Riel went to Gov. MacTavish and demanded from the Company the loan of Ten Thousand pounds <sup>£2000</sup><sup>1</sup> Sterling or three hundred pounds to be paid down—this the Governor refused to comply with—hence the seizure of the cash.<sup>2</sup> Some report about the Company having a sinking fund of £1500 in their hands belonging to the Government of Assiniboia is going the rounds and that Riel is determined to make the H.B.C. pay it as well as all the duties on goods having gone to the interior since the Spring.

Merchants also it is said will be obliged to pay duty contrary to the usual custom on all goods gone to the interior.

It is becoming evident that Riel is determined to carry things with a high hand and rumors heretofore not heard are being circulated in favor of annexation to the United States.

The bargain on account of the non-arrival of Col. Stutsman has not been completed between The Red River Pioneer Newspaper proprietor Mr. Coldwell & Major Robinson & Stutsman.

The mail came in to-night—very meagre news regarding this country.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

<sup>2</sup> See No. xiv below.



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Messrs. Pierre Leveiller<sup>1</sup> and Ambroise Lépine<sup>2</sup> French council[lor]s to-day resolved on leaving Riel and his party as they thought them to be going too far.

*Friday, 24th December, 1869*

Weather still frosty and cold.

Riel has it is said impressed the clerks in the store of the H.B.C. into his service for to-day to serve out goods to the men that have been standing on guard lately.

Consequently all men of the French party who have been under arms are paid off to-day at the rate of 15/- per week—the payment has altogether been made in goods from the H.B.C. store.

Riel announces his determination of keeping a guard in Fort Garry of 50 men till the spring.

Sundry rumors are abroad about a new tariff to be inaugurated at once on goods some say a great deal over 4%.

Mr. O'Donohue has not yet started for the States.

Mr. Riel paid a visit last evening to Mr. Wm. Fraser<sup>3</sup> Kildonan Parish to see what prospect there was of the English speaking side of the settlers joining in the Provisional Government. Mr. Fraser said he could not say what were the feelings of his neighbours exactly except that they would like to know the intents & purposes of the Provisional Government. Mr. Riel said in reply that they the French still desired the English and Scotch to join them—twelve English council[lor]s and twelve French—these twenty four to elect a Governor or President from amongst their own number. The council[lor]s to act as judges in civil cases and the country to be under martial law. The object of the Provisional Government to be to arrange for the future welfare of the settlement and to make terms for Annexation to some government whichever may be found as most advantageous to the settlers as a body. Mr. Fraser said he would state the matter to his people and to-day Mr. Riel told him that if the English speaking people will not join the French the latter would force it on them in time.

Midnight Mass was celebrated to-night at the Catholic Cathedral,

<sup>1</sup> Léveillé ; see note 2 on p. 167 above.

<sup>2</sup> Ambroise-Didyme Lépine, *circa* 1840-1923, *métis* of St. Boniface ; succeeded Riel as military leader of the resistance on December 27, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> William Fraser, 1831-1909, of Middlechurch District ; Councillor of Assiniboia, 1868-1870.

the attendance was not as large as usual and chiefly composed of women.

A salute (18 guns) from the large guns of Fort Garry was fired about midnight. It is reported now that O'Donohue is only going as far as Chicago and Milwaukee—he has not left yet.

The result of the trial of Mrs. Rodway vs. Mrs. Meeken was damages all round 10/- to 20/- each.

Mr. Riel arranged that Mr. Snow would not be further annoyed by the Indians around Oak Point and the Government Provisions &c are stored in different private houses in the neighbourhood of the Road works. Larson has assuredly fled the country towards Portage La Prairie.

President Bruce has retired from being the head of the French party on account of his health and now acts only as a council[l]or. Dr. Schultz was this evening separated from his wife and put under solitary confinement in Fort Garry—the scene of the parting from Mrs. Schultz was heart-rending—and Riel had difficulty in persuading his guard to separate the Dr. from her. It is reported that Charles Nolin has left the French council & gone home not to return.

*Saturday, 25th December, 1869*

Christmas day—weather mild & pleasant.

There were the usual services in the churches. Grand Vicaire Thibault<sup>1</sup> one of the Commissioners is expected in this afternoon or evening. De Salaberry<sup>2</sup> the other commissioner has arrived at Pembina but has not attempted to come further than that point in the meantime.

Dr. Tupper<sup>3</sup> member of the Dominion Parliament from Nova Scotia has also arrived at Pembina—he has come to bring back his daughter Mrs. Cameron—wife of Capt. Cameron. It is expected that the French

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Jean-Baptiste Thibault, 1810–1879 ; came to Red River in 1833 ; taught at St. Boniface College, and served as missionary at White Horse Plains, and on the Saskatchewan ; retired to Canada in 1868.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Charles de Salaberry, 1820–1882, son of the victor at the battle of Chateauguay, 1813. In 1857–1858 he was in charge of the commissariat of the Dawson expedition to Red River and became popular among the *métis* ; and he was a Quebec Forestry Commissioner in the District of Montreal, 1869–1882.

<sup>3</sup> The Honourable (later Sir) Charles Tupper, 1821–1915, M.D., M.P. for Cumberland, Nova Scotia, in 1869–1870 ; later became member of Federal Cabinet, High Commissioner in United Kingdom, and Prime Minister of Canada.

will not allow either the Vicaire Thibault or De [sic] Salaberry to go at large over the settlement until they know their real intentions.

The Vicaire Thibault is very much liked by the White Horse Plain people and it is supposed that he will have a good deal of influence over them. Ex President Bruce still declares the intention of the French party to be to treat with Canada but they want the rights they ask to be secured to them ere they will give in.

It is said Pierre Leveiller after having left the French party was persuaded to return to it on Mr. Riel promising to give back the H.B.C. Cash box "*as he had taken it*" to the Company.

Ambrois [sic] Lépine has not left the French party although he is wavering in his opinions.

The prisoners were to have got a Christmas Dinner but for some reason or another it did not reach them—the French however did nothing to prevent it—the hitch is supposed to be with the prisoners friends outside. Mail went out as usual.

A heavy jollification at Emerlings Hotel—*all drunk*.

*Sunday, 26th December, 1869*

Weather beautifully mild & pleasant.

Grand Vicaire Thibault has arrived and was escorted to St. Boniface. De Salaberry is still at Pembina & sent by a man to see if there were letters in R.R. Post Office for him. It is evident now that Americans have a great deal of influence over the movement amongst the French—whether they have had it from the beginning is not known. It appears to be the intention of Riel to declare for independence—be recognized by the United States and afterwards be admitted into the Union as a Territory. It is not believed that this will be to the advantage of the French Half Breeds. And it is very doubtful whether the move will be a successful one.

Oscar Malmoras the American Consul is mixing himself up with the French party much more than seems necessary in his position.

It is said that it is spoken off [sic] to put H. S. Donaldson in the place of O'Donoghue in the latter's absence in the States—this if done will show which way the wind blows.

Stutsman has not arrived from Pembina yet but is working for *his* cause where he is.

It is reported that the money will be paid over to Coldwell for his printing press etc. to-morrow.



Heavy offers of assistance has [sic] been made from the States to Riel—also promise of recognition. Offers have also been made from Canadien sources to Riel to make a pecuniary settlement of the difficulties—the latter was refused by Riel.<sup>1</sup>

It is expected that we will hear more of independence in a few days.

*Monday, 27th December, 1869*

The bargain between Coldwell and Major Robinson was not brought to a close to-day but it was merely made binding by Robinson paying Coldwell £1 one pound Sterling. Robinson denies receiving any assistance from Riel or his party in the purchase of the Printing Press.

Louis Thibault<sup>2</sup> is reported to be lending £500 five hundred pounds Sterling towards purchasing the newspaper—Robinson to give £50 and conduct the sheet in the interests of the people. This Robinson also denies as he asserts it is purely a private enterprise between him & Stutsman. It is said the Provisional Government do not intend to enforce anything more than the usual duties till next spring and that parties will not be required to pay duty on goods already gone to the interior.

Grand Vicaire Thibault has been in the Fort to-day and it is said a close watch is being kept on him. De Salaberry still at Pembina and no word as yet as to the reception to be given the commissioners from Canada. Thibault it is said will say nothing one way or another till De Salaberry is brought in. Riel it appears did not wish that that gentleman should come in. But the White Horse Plain People would not listen to this. So Twenty-men [sic] are reported to have left for Pembina this morning to bring in De Salaberry.

Last evening the clerks of the Company in Fort Garry got on a spree and disarmed the guard at the gate—they then marched to the town and back again with the guns of the men they had disarmed. The guard must have been weak and lax in their duties. Donald G. Smith<sup>3</sup> [sic]

<sup>1</sup> It has not been possible to confirm this statement repeated by Bishop Taché, *Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territories*, 1874, p. 41 and by Schmidt, No. xvi below. In the Riel papers in P.A.M., only a few offers of individual assistance are to be found.

<sup>2</sup> Louis Thibault, ?-1820, brother of Grand Vicar Thibault; kept an inn of dubious reputation; returned to Quebec in 1875.

<sup>3</sup> Donald A. Smith, 1820-1914, later Lord Strathcona, then Chief Factor in charge of Hudson's Bay Company affairs in Canada, and third Canadian Commissioner; later resident Governor of the Company, and Canadian High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

and Richard Hardisty<sup>1</sup> (H.B.C. officers) arrived at Fort Garry this afternoon from Canada the former to assist Gov. MacTavish in the discharges of his duties. When they arrived at the Gate of the Fort Mr. Riel met them and insisted on their walking into his quarters before they would be allowed to see Gov. MacTavish—and retained their papers. The American residents in the Town of Winnipeg and those at Pembina have of late greatly interested themselves in the movements of the French and are evidently trying to mislead Riel in favor of annexation to the States. H. S. Donaldson, Major Robinson, Oscar Malmoras, and Stutsman at Pembina are all admitted to the secret councils of Riel. The following letter was *found in a newspaper* and copied in presence of Coldwell and Mr. Bannatyne and shows part of the game being played. The letter was open not having even been put in an envelope but was done up in that way in a newspaper addressed to Louis Riel.

Pembina Dec. 25th 1869

Dear General,

I wish you and your friends a very happy Christmas. I herewith send you a St. Paul paper containing a communication from Mr. Nelson of this place. Tuesdays mail will bring us St. Paul papers containing matters of interest on Red River Affairs. I have not seen Col. de Salaberry yet. Dr. Tupper called on me a few moments since. He came to take home his daughter who is the wife of Capt. Cameron. Dr. Tupper is member of the Dominion Parliament from Nova Scotia. If it be deemed necessary to confer with the Canadian Commissioners would it not be advisable that such conference should take place on this frontier? I am afraid that if De Salaberry and Father Thibault (who I see by recent Canadian papers is just as much of a commissioner as Col. De Salaberry) are permitted to have free communication with your people they will give you trouble. In as much as Father Thibault comes in an official capacity he should be regarded as an official and *not* as a minister of Christ. If he *being an official agent of the Canadian Government* be admitted—why reject McDougall or De Salaberry?

Regards to friend Donohue,

Ever yours,

STUTSMAN.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hardisty, 1832–1889, in service of Company and later Chief Factor; brother-in-law of Donald A. Smith; later Senator, 1887–1889.

<sup>2</sup> This letter is not printed in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, but reference is made to Stutsman's suggestion that the Canadian Commissioners be met at the frontier.

The paper referred to as containing Nelson's statement was the St. Paul Press of 17th Dec. 1869.<sup>1</sup>

Weather mild and pleasant.

Mail came in as usual.

Mr. A. McArthur on going to visit his brother in prison on Christmas day was detained himself till after midnight of same day until released by Riel. An effort is being made by Messrs. Snow & McArthur to make amends for the omission on Christmas day in not sending the prisoners a dinner to send them one some time this week. Mr. Snow after being warned to leave the settlement by Riel some time ago is now ordered to remain. Reports are going abroad that Riel is drinking—others that he is going deranged—neither are generally believed. Reports also go to say that Father Thibault left Canada with a wrong impression as to the troubles here and that he is not therefore in a position to deal with them—this also is considered false.

*Tuesday, 28th December, 1869*

Weather a little colder than yesterday but pleasant.

The Burke brothers made a demand on Riel for the release of some or all the prisoners and stated that if not complied with before next Saturday they would take them out by force. Riel it is said wished that Father Thibault should not be allowed to go at large amongst the people but this was dissented from by all the French except six who sided with Riel. Thibault preached last Sunday to the French.

Donald A. Smith is supposed by some to be a commissioner from Canada but this cannot be so as Mr. Riel obliged him on his first entrance into Fort Garry and before he would be allowed to see Gov. MacTavish to give his word that he would not interfere for or against the French cause while he remained in the Settlement.

Dr. Tupper arrived at Fort Garry last evening and saw Riel and departed for Pembina this morning—he succeeded it is said in procuring the private baggage belonging to Capt. & Mrs. Cameron on paying the charges on same—it is said Mrs. Tupper has been in great distress regarding her daughter (Mrs. Cameron) and hence Dr. Tupper's visit to bring Mrs. C. back to Canada.

<sup>1</sup> The *St. Paul Press* for December 17, 1869, contains a despatch signed "Pemmican" from Pembina, which rings the changes on the danger of an Indian war and declares Schultz, Bown and Ross will be the first victims. No communication signed by Nelson appears in any St. Paul paper of December 17, 1869.



The French yesterday broke into the H.B.C. stables and took two horses from them but they not being sufficient for their purpose they returned them and took two mules the property of the Company in their place. Mr. Le May<sup>1</sup> late collector of Customs at Pembina was in town to-day. It appears that he has been anticipating taking part in the conducting of the new newspaper to be started in the interests of the French party. On being told that Stutsman was calculating to belong to the paper or part of the paper to belong to him Le May seemed put out and stated that the information he had received might change his plans and instead of starting at once for Pembina as he intended it would necessitate a visit to St. Boniface. Stutsman & Le May are on bad terms with each other and it is evident it has been kept a secret from him Stutsman's proposed connection with the paper. Has Stutsman backed out or what? The bargain between Coldwell and Robinson for the printing press was completed to-day and the money paid over—the sale was effected in the name of Coldwell and Co. to Robinson and Co. The parcels of money paid to Coldwell was [sic] marked in the handwriting of J. H. McTavish. The money was paid over in the store of H. S. Donaldson and in the presence of Donaldson, A. G. B. Bannatyne & Lilly<sup>3</sup> of Fort Alexandria. People are beginning to think that Col. Dennis showed the white feather while conservator of the peace.

*Robinson and  
Co.<sup>2</sup>*

John Bruce is suspected of acting double as a spy—he is recovering his health more rapidly since he retired from being president. Some French Half Breeds lately arrived report having met McDougall on his way to Abercrombie and that he asked them on which side they were—they said the English or Canadian. He then told them that the day would come when he would put his foot on the necks of the French—not likely! Mr. Thibault it is said on meeting McDougall refused to camp with him but sent one of his men to show their late camp.

Mr. Le May reports that he can substantiate the fact that McDougall used very abusive language towards the French Half Breeds while he stayed at Pembina.

Mail went out as usual.

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Lemay, 1829–1892, French-Canadian ; had lived since 1850 in Minnesota where he was attorney-at-law and notary public ; Collector of Customs at Pembina until 1868 ; was to come to Manitoba in 1870 and sit for St. Norbert in the first Legislative Assembly.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note. "LOUIS THIBAUT" scratched out in text.

<sup>3</sup> Probably A. R. Lillie, Junior Chief Trader of Lac la Pluie in 1872.

Wednesday, 29th December, 1869

Weather very mild and pleasant.

The following was issued the day before yesterday from Fort Garry and a copy sent to the other barkeepers in the town.

Fort Garry 27th December 1869

Mr. Onésime Monchamps

Sir,

I do hereby respectfully pray you to let nobody have any liquor at your place—from this date up to the tenth of January next. In so doing you will grant the country a great favor and very likely preserve it from great misfortune.

Very respectfully,

Yours,

[Signed] LOUIS RIEL

Commander at Fort Garry.<sup>1</sup>

It is reported that Prince's Indians are coming to Fort Garry but what their intention is not known—Riel expects them and it is said they will be up by the 4th of next month.

Louis Schmidt<sup>2</sup> has been appointed Secretary of the French party in place of Riel who has been elected President.<sup>3</sup>

It is said that Oscar Malmoras [sic] American Consul has been a good deal at Fort Garry on account of Capt. Cameron's servant man who is an American—this partly explains the numerous visits of the Consul to Riel but it is still suspected that he is working a good deal with the French party.

The name of the coming newspaper has not been decided upon but it is to be issued on next Tuesday. Its tone it is said will be moderate and in favor of the union of the people on some issue—It will strongly condemn the late actions of the Canadian Government.

It being reported that Messrs Bannatyne & Begg and E. L. Barber<sup>4</sup> were

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 204.

<sup>2</sup> Louis Schmidt, 1844–1935, *métis*, probably of German descent; educated at St. Boniface and sent, in 1858, with Louis Riel and Daniel MacDougall, to Quebec to continue their studies: Schmidt at the Collège de Saint-Hyacinthe. He returned to Red River in 1861. See *Memoirs*, No. xv below; also D. Frémont, *Les Secrétaires de Riel* (Montreal, 1953).

<sup>3</sup> Begg was evidently unaware of the meeting or convention of the French on December 27, which made, or confirmed, these and other changes.

<sup>4</sup> E. L. Barber, 1834–1909, an American who came to Red River by way of Minnesota in 1860; merchant; assisted Schultz to edit the *Nor'Wester*; unaccountably omitted from plan of Winnipeg on p. 206.

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exceptions to the order as above to not sell liquor the former of the parties addressed the following letter to Riel as they did not desire to be exempted in a case where there was to be a benefit to the Settlement if there was any exemption at all.

Red River Settlement  
December 29th 1869

Louis Riel Esq.

Dear Sir, Having heard that you have requested certain parties in this town to refrain from selling liquor until the 10th of next month and that at the same time you have made us an exception to this request. We are desirous of ascertaining the truth of what we have heard and now beg of you to enlighten us.

Yours very truly,  
BANNATYNE & BEGG.

It is said that the prisoners with the exception of the ringleaders are to be released shortly on parole.

Jos. Le May late collector at Pembina is to have nothing to do with the coming newspaper. Riel has not yet made his intended visit amongst the English settlers to explain his views to them and it is doubtful now if he will go at all.

Lusted has been heard of [on the] other side of Pembina on his way to Canada. A Frenchman arrived from down the settlement with fish some days ago so the Indians near Lake Winnipeg have not interfered as reported they would with the French going for fish—towards the lake.

*Thursday, 30th December, 1869*

This has been the mildest day we have as yet experienced this winter. Some of the prisoners were to-day tried and acquitted but it is not known whether they have been released.

Parker the prisoner is said to be more concerned in the late rising against the French than was first supposed.

Pierre Lavellier<sup>1</sup> brought in news to-day that the Sioux Indians were on their way to Fort Garry in a band of some fifty men and it is supposed there are others following. These Indians it appears would not give a good account of themselves and on being told to return towards the Portage they insisted on going as far as Winnipeg Town. They are fully armed and well supplied with ammunition blankets &c. &c. which it is

<sup>1</sup> Whether Pierre Lévillé, or Pierre Lavallée is uncertain.



said they got from those they call the English. The movements of these Indians are looked upon with suspicion by many but others contend that they will never fight against the French Half Breeds and that they are merely coming down to see for themselves "what is the row?" It is reported that offers have been made them to fight against the French.

On account of this Sioux trouble a meeting of the townspeople was called in the Engine House for the purpose of raising a company to fight these Indians if necessary—the same routine was gone through as on the 4th of this month only Capt. Donaldson, H. F. O'Lone and Major Robinson were elected officers.<sup>1</sup> H. F. O'Lone stated at the meeting this evening that the former company was not got up for the same purpose as the present one which was certainly not thus understood at the time by a great many who enrolled themselves in the former Company. O'Donohue stated at the meeting that the French were arranging to meet the Sioux and advised the townspeople to act in concert with them. De Salaberry is expected in to-night.

The mail came in.

*Friday, 31st December, 1869*

Weather mild and pleasant.

This morning the excitement about the Sioux was greater than last evening. A meeting of the Volunteer Company was called at 9 O'Clock A.M. and there it was resolved that the men should start off at once and that the Sioux Indians who were reported on the road should not be allowed nearer to the town than about a mile.

It was afterwards determined that the Company should not leave the Engine House at once but that scouts be sent out to find out the whereabouts of the Sioux and if possible their intentions.

Word was brought in that the Indians could not reach the town before night, another report was that they were dancing[?] along within three miles of the town—certain members of the company now turned out and two or three being on horseback went in advance over three miles up the Assiniboine but came back having neither heard nor seen anything of the Indians.

Alex. Begg went as far as Jas. McKay[']s<sup>2</sup> to see what that gentleman thought of the matter and found that he (Jas. McKay) did not credit any

<sup>1</sup> The Americans, of course, had particular cause to fear the Sioux.

<sup>2</sup> That is to "Deer Lodge", Silver Heights, in west St. James, some six miles from Fort Garry. For McKay, see note 1 on p. 197.

hostile intentions on the part of the Sioux but believed that they were merely coming down on a begging mission, the fact that they were armed he did not wonder at as that tribe of Sioux never travel anywhere unless armed. Reports were brought in to Mr. McKays that lead [sic] him to believe the Sioux would camp at his place to-night as he said they never passed his house without calling.

About five O'Clock three Sioux made their appearance and were invited by Mr. McKay into his dining room—they said the rest of their band were camped about a mile up the road. This was an untruth as the chief soon afterwards arrived with the whole of his men. Mr. McKay cleared out his dining room and invited the whole band to a council. There were present besides the Indians, Mr. Jas. McKay, two of the Burke brothers, Pierre Laveiller, François Dauphinie, Pierre Poitras, John F. Grant,<sup>1</sup> Baptiste Morin,<sup>2</sup> Charles Nolin, Isiore Lagomonière, Wm. O'Donohue, Alex. Begg. Louis Riel afterwards came in. - - - - - acted as interpreter.

François Dauphinie made the first speech followed by Mr. O'Donohue who however was going into matters foreign to the moment about promising certain things to the Indians. Mr. Jas. McKay stopped him however and took up the thread of the speech turning it in a different way. Mr. McKay told the Sioux that we were friendly to them and because of our friendship we came to warn them not to go to the town as there was trouble there and they would be in danger if they went. He also told them that it was none of their business and they must turn back to-morrow morning from whence they came. Pierre Poitras afterwards spoke and was followed by the chief of the Indians who said they were at peace with the people of the country and that they did not desire to do them harm nor interfere with their quarrels. He said they had heard so many stories that they had come down to hear for themselves and also to get their usual presents at New Year's time. He referred to his silver medal having the Queen's head and British coat of arms on it as having afforded his band protection for over eight years—and that he would not like that protection stopped.<sup>3</sup> He consented to return to the

<sup>1</sup> John F. Grant, *métis* despite his name, son of Richard Grant, Chief Trader ; a store-keeper in St. Charles.

<sup>2</sup> Jean-Baptiste Morin, *dit* Perrault ?

<sup>3</sup> Presumably medals given to the Sioux by the Governor-General of the Canadas in the War of 1812 ; in which case the text should read " King's head ". The eight years would be from 1862, the year of the Minnesota massacre.

Portage in the morning and was promised his usual presents before he would leave. The council then broke up after which the Indians gave a dance in the room to the music of the drum and voices. Mr. McKay afterwards brought out a galvanic battery and gave some of the Indians electric shocks. All were highly astonished and one poor Indian fainted. Wm. Drever Jnr. and J. C. Kennedy being out as scouts met the band of Indians before they reached McKays and it is said the Indians in fun gave their warhoop [sic] which had the effect of suddenly turning Drever & Kennedy towards home and fearing lest their report might induce some of the town's people to sally out and do damage, one of the Burkes started for the town to tell them to remain quiet. A watch was kept around the town all night the headquarters being at the Engine house—there were several cases of insubordination amongst the members of the volunteer company and evidently a good feeling does not exist in it. Thus ended the year of 1869.

*Saturday, 1st January, 1870*

The first day of the new year.

Weather slightly snowing and blustering somewhat—wind part of the day high. The usual visiting took place. Mr. Donald Smith is staying with Dr. Cowan—and was visited by some of the townspeople. Grand Vicaire Thibault is staying at the Bishop's palace at St. Boniface and was also called upon by some of the townspeople. There were two horse races today. One between Goodwin Marchands<sup>1</sup> horse and that of John Lennon's<sup>2</sup> mare. Stakes £10—Marchand the victor. The other between Robt. Tait's horse and that of Jos. Millien<sup>3</sup>—Stakes unknown. Tait the victor.

Mr. De Salaberry not in yet—it is not known what is keeping him. The French desire a union of the whole settlement—and state their intention of treating with Canada.

A large dancing party was given by Mr. E. L. Barber the first of the season—it passed off very well.

Mail went out as usual in the evening.

The Sioux Indians are reported to have gone back to-day although one or two of them ventured as far as the town no doubt to spy out the land.

<sup>1</sup> Goodwin Marchand ; probably Cyrille Marchand, farmer at St. Norbert.

<sup>2</sup> John Lennon, saloon-keeper of Lennon and Cosgrove's.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Millien, 1830-?, in full, Joseph Genton, *dit* Dauphinais, son of Maximilien Genton, Councillor of Assiniboia. These races were trotting races on the river ice.



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These Indians deny having been employed by the Canadian government but one cannot believe what they say—they are noted liars as well as murderers.

Mr. Riel addressed a large meeting at Oak Point of French people and it is said pledged himself for Canada on proper terms.<sup>1</sup>

*Sunday, 2nd January, 1870*

Weather pleasant and not too cold.

The usual services took place to-day except at Holy Trinity this latter was caused through some mischief maker breaking a number of windows in the church. Archdeacon McLean therefore did not have service in the evening.

De Salaberry did not arrive as was expected—no news regarding him.

Word was brought in that Dr. Bown was seen at Fort Alexander in fact Mr. Bannatyne received a letter from the ex editor to forward on his mail. It is supposed he is on his way to Eagle['s] Nest.<sup>2</sup> Larson is supposed to be out at Lake Manitoba as he was seen in that direction. One of the prisoners is reported to have escaped through a window at the Court House—his name is Wm. Nimmons.

*Monday, 3rd January, 1870*

Weather mild and pleasant.

A movement is to be tried to bring about a union of the whole settlement.

De Salaberry has not yet arrived.

Everything remains quiet. Mr. Hardisty who accompanied Mr. Smith is kept a prisoner in Fort Garry.

Mrs. Schultz was given leave to depart from the Fort as she is not considered a prisoner by the French. At one time she was about going to live in the town, but the fear that she will not, if she does, be able to see Dr. Schultz, has decided her to remain where she is.

Mr. O'Donohue has not left for the States yet and it is not certain whether he will go or not.

A surprise party was got up at Alex. Logan's house the dancing &c. was kept up till after four O'Clock and the party was a success. The new newspaper is expected out to-morrow.

<sup>1</sup> Riel had difficulty in winning the people of Oak Point to support him, because of the influence of J. B. Morin and Charles Nolin.

<sup>2</sup> This was true. Bown was to spend some time at the Hudson's Bay post of Eagle's Nest on the Winnipeg river, near the present boundary of Ontario and Manitoba.

Mail arrived to-day—not a great deal of news—word apparently has not been heard in Canada as far as we can judge from newspaper report of the taking of the prisoners in Schultz house—this is strange.

Six or seven of the prisoners in the Court House were released to-day—some it is said on condition that they leave the settlement in a day or two—others on parol [sic].

*Tuesday, 4th January, 1870*

Weather somewhat blustering and towards evening it became very rough. Mr. Snow and his son are starting to-morrow for Canada and are endeavouring to obtain the release of Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Mulkins, and a pass for Mr. Grant, Col. Dennis' bookkeeper.

Grand Vicaire Thibault is reported to have gone to White Horse Plains. Another party left to-day to go for Mr. De Salaberry—the reason he has not arrived before this it is said is that there has been some misunderstanding between him and Vicaire Thibault—some say that De Salaberry expected the Vicaire to return to Pembina for him or send a letter—as De Salaberry received no written invitation he did not think proper to come. However it is expected that he will be here now in a day or two. Riel asserts that he is in favour of an arrangement with Canada and is anxious for the English to join the French to meet the Commissioners—and if the commissioners are not able to grant what the people want—for the whole Settlement to frame a list of the demands to be secured—then send De Salaberry back with the list—and that in the meantime until Canada is heard from for the people unitedly to form a Provisional Government for their safety and to be the better able to treat with Canada.

*Wednesday, 5th January, 1870*

Weather rough blustering and cold—wind very high and snow drifting—cleared up towards evening.

It is reported that another batch of prisoners are to be released to-day—or to-morrow.

Messrs. Wm. & Robt. Tait came down to-day and visited the council of the French to see whether anything could be done to unite the two sides of the settlement. The French councillors told them they were desirous of a union and would wait for it—that they were agreed that an even representation should be in the united council. Mr. Wm. Tait & Alex. Begg went and visited John Sutherland for the purpose of getting him

to influence himself [sic] in his parish of Kildonan to get the Scotch people to send a delegate to the Provisional Government. Messrs. Robt. & Wm. Tait are to visit as far down as the Stone Fort to work along quietly in stirring up the matter amongst the people—they will have a hard piece of work—John Sutherland will as he has done all along do his best for the good of the people. It is felt that to be able to treat properly with the Commissioners from Canada the people should be united—and that if these commissioners are not treated with now, the golden chance is lost and God knows where the country will drift to.

The new newspaper is not to be out till Friday.

Another dancing spree was given by J. H. McTavish and others at Marion's<sup>1</sup> across the river.

This morning my poor dog "Tip" was found dead on the snow. He apparently had been worried by other dogs. Faithful, true and plucky—poor old Tip will be long remembered by his master.

Alexander Begg

Mr. De Salaberry arrived this evening.

*Thursday, 6th January, 1870*

Weather sharp during the day but not unpleasant. It became boisterous towards evening.

Mr. Bannatyne having seen Mr. Riel last evening about Mr. Mulkins obtained the release of that gentleman from prison as well as Mr. Hamilton. Both started with Mr. Snow this morning for Canada. Mr. Riel states he desired Mr. Snow to remain in the country and go on with the Lake of the Woods road but Mr. Snow would not. Ashdown the tinsmith one of the prisoners was allowed out of confinement to fix up some stoves in the printing office—he was accompanied by a guard and is to return to prison after the job is done.

The mail came in to-day as usual no news of importance in it.

Mr. De Salaberry has not been known to go about amongst the people but it is also unknown whether he is prevented from doing so or not. Mr. Riel on seeing Mr. Bannatyne last evening asked the latter to accept the office of Postmaster and Head of the Courts under the Provisional Government at the same time stating to Mr. B[annatyne] that it was the intention of that government to treat with Canada or England—to-day in the evening according to appointment Mr. Riel again met Mr.

<sup>1</sup> This was the home of Roger Marion, 1846–1920, French-Canadian, and brother-in-law of Norman W. Kittson.



Bannatyne and after a long conversation on various subjects the latter gentleman consented to accept the offices offered to him on condition that it was understood that the object of the Provisional Government was to treat if possible with Canada for a just union with that country or England—failing these two to look elsewhere. That as soon as a union of both sides of the settlement shall take place there will be an even and fair representation of English & French and that the election or appointment of officers will be subject to the united voice of the united councillors from all parts of the settlement. It to be understood that Annexation to the States is not the direct policy of the Provisional Government—Mr. Bannatyne declares himself a loyal subject of Great Britain but if utterly ignored by that country he is ready to follow the general voice of the people in whatsoever direction is found to be for the good of the settlement. The promise of Mr. Bannatyne to join the Provisional Government is to be ratified to-morrow on his being assured of the honest intentions of that Government. Mr. Bannatyne is then to be allowed to have free intercourse with Mr. De Salaberry & Father Thibault. If Mr. B. on joining the new government finds he has falsely been dealt by he will be at liberty to leave when he likes.

Mr. Robinson is not to have it all his own way with the new newspaper. The letter referred to on the 27th Decr. last in this Journal from Stutsman was found the other day inside the Fort—lying on the ground with the signature torn off. It seemed as if it had been used in the performance of a natural duty in which a man must necessarily place one hand behind him—directing it towards the end of his spine—enough said!

There was another dancing spree at Miles McDermots<sup>1</sup> this evening—all went of [sic] well. The new newspaper is to be out to-morrow and will be called “The New Nation”. It appears several applications for offices have been made to Riel by Americans—but have so far been put aside—one was to get H. S. Donaldson in as Postmaster!! Mercer and Eccles have been released from prison.

*Friday, 7th January, 1870*

To-day was extremely cold and very blustering in the morning—became extremely cold (the wind dying away) towards evening. This morning the first issue of the newspaper “The New Nation” came out.

<sup>1</sup> Son of Andrew McDermot.

The name is not appropriate<sup>1</sup> nor the annexation to the States sentiments contained in the sheet wise nor right. Annexation although it might ultimately benefit the country generally will not be for the good of the present settlers especially the French. The class of settlers that will flow in here from the States will not be of the kind we require—and the Americans as a rule are not the people to care much for the condition and interests of the people now here as long as their go-ahead-ism is not interfered with—Canada although she has committed grave blunders with regard to this country would be the best annexation we could adopt as long as she will repair the error she has committed. If not Canada then let us stick to the old “Union Jack”, but if both ignore us then let us do the best we can for ourselves as a free people.

A great many complaints have been made of late from every quarter. Hudson Bay Company—the Catholic priests—and the people generally that letters coming in have been tampered with—and suspicion is aroused that letters going out are stopped somewhere. The locality of this grievance is not known but it is suspected to be Pembina. Some say McDougall bribed the mail man when he was at Pembina and that through this means he got access to the letters. Others strongly suspect Stutsman and Cavalier the latter the postmaster at Pembina. It will yet come out where this great wrong has been done to a people and who by. In the evening the MacTavish Fire Engine Coy No. 1. gave a ball in their engine house which passed off pleasantly with the exception of one little row.

*Saturday, 8th January, 1870*

The weather still kept cold and frosty to-day.

Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne was sworn in to-day to the Provisional Government on the assurance & understanding however that the intentions and purposes of that government were and are the same as has been already described in this journal viz.—first loyalty to Britain and a desire to treat with & enter into the Dominion of Canada under proper terms.

Mr. James Ross is like a weather cock—it is said that yesterday he declared himself while in the office of “The New Nation” in favor of

<sup>1</sup> Begg had not grasped the allusion to the habit of the *métis* of referring to themselves as the “new nation”.

Annexation to the States—to-day he is bitter against it. Frank La Rose escaped from prison last night through bribing an idiotic boy that was on guard—Casimer.

The following was printed at the office of "The New Nation" by order of Riel.

## ORDERS

of

### THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT OF RUPERT'S LAND

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The People of Rupert's Land are notified by these Presents.

That at a Meeting of the Representatives of the People held at Fort Garry on the 27th day of December 1869 the following Resolutions were adopted :

1st. Mr. John Bruce having on account of ill health resigned his position as President, Mr. Louis Riel was chosen to replace him.

The new President takes this opportunity in conjunction with the Representatives of the People to express their high sense of the qualities which distinguish the Ex President—among others his modesty, the natural moderation of his character and the justness of his judgement. These qualities which were of such great assistance to the people deserve public recognition, and the Representatives accepted his resignation only in the hope thereby to preserve the health of one dear to them.

2nd. Mr. François Xavier Dauphinais has been chosen Vice President.

3rd. Mr. Louis Schmidt has been appointed Secretary of the Council.

4th. Mr. W. B. O'Donohue has been appointed Secretary-Treasurer.

5th. Mr. Ambroise Lépine has been appointed Adjutant-General.

6th. It has also been decided that Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne should be continued in his position of Postmaster.

7th. All the officers or employees of the old Government, who might pretend to exercise that old authority shall be punished for high treason.

8th. Justice shall be administered by the Adjutant-General whose Council shall be composed of Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne, Mr. F. X. Dauphinais and Mr. Pierre Poitras.

This Council will sit on the first and third Monday of each month.

9th. All Licenses for the Sale of intoxicating liquors must be given by the Adjutant's Council and all those who took this kind of License on the 1st December last must have them renewed by the said Council.

In publishing these Orders the President and Representatives of the people anxious to draw upon the exercise of their authority the blessing of Heaven and the approbation of all announce to the people of Ruperts Land that they



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have pardoned twelve political prisoners, showing thereby that clemency and forgiveness are as familiar to them as severity.

LOUIS RIEL, President  
LOUIS SCHMIDT, Secretary<sup>1</sup>

Mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 9th January, 1870*

Weather still cold but pleasant.

It is said Mr. Riel spoke to Major Robinson strongly against the tone of his newspaper in favor of Annexation to the States.

The usual services took place to-day.

A plot was discovered the other day between Dr. & Mrs. Schultz to aid it is supposed in the release of Schultz. A dirty collar which was sent by the Dr. to his wife was found to have words to the following effect written and concealed in it:

[“] Get as usual—spit blood—and have me sent for.[”]

It is supposed that this has been a plan concocted to effect the escape of Dr. Schultz. Mrs. Schultz true to the plan has been very ill and will see no medical adviser but her husband and refused to see Dr. Bird.

Mrs. Mair called on De Salaberry to have him use his influence to obtain the services either of Dr. Schultz or Dr. O'Donnell for Mrs. Stewart<sup>2</sup> who she said was dying—stating at the same time that no medical assistance could be obtained for her in the town. De Salaberry stated that he would do what he could for her but that he had not much power being himself pretty much a prisoner. In justice to Dr. Bird Mrs. Mair's statement was not correct as he (Dr. B) had already visited Mrs. Stewart<sup>2</sup> and has not been from home for a fortnight had he been called. Five prisoners escaped to-night amongst others Mr. Mair—he was very much excited and dashed into the house of Wm. Drever Jnr. asking for something stimulating to drink—which he got—he then bought a cap & coat neither of which he had. He said he and the escaped prisoners were bound for the Portage. The French are after them.

<sup>1</sup> This proclamation is printed in Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 913-914, from Begg, *History of the North-West*, I (Toronto, 1894), p. 440. It is not, however, in *The Creation of Manitoba*. Begg remarks in his *History of the North-West*, I, p. 441, that publication had not been authorized and that all possible copies were called in, and implies that divided counsels prevailed among the French at this time. See below, p. 258.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably Mrs. Schultz. Mrs. Stewart was the wife of James Stewart, Schultz's assistant.

*Monday, 10th January, 1870*

Weather sharp but pleasant.

It is reported to-day that twelve prisoners instead of five escaped—three of whom have been recaptured.

Mr. Jos. Le May arrived to-day from Pembina. He speaks of Annexation to the States as almost impossible at present and in favor of making arrangements with Canada.

Col. Stutsman the opposition party to the "venerable Joseph" also arrived to-day from Pembina but too late "to give forth" to any extent. He however talks mysteriously about men on the road from the States to help the French "Humbug".

Mr. William Tait and his brother Robert returned from the direction of the Stone Fort last Friday evening. They report good success in their endeavours amongst the people to get them to join the Provisional Government. Mr. Wm. Tait however has a new hobby in favor of the Hudson Bay Coy. again ruling the only difference to be that the people shall elect their representatives to the Council. This is all very well but cant be done and only goes to show how vac[c]ilating the English people are—as soon as there seems to be a chance for the union of the whole Settlement some new hobby arises to stop it.

The mail came in as usual—and was a very large one. It brought startling news of filibustering expeditions from the States to this country. The news however has not caused a great deal of excitement. A report was brought in that all the escaped prisoners had been captured in the direction of White Horse Plains. One of them captured near Fort Garry had his feet badly frozen.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. O'Donoghue called at the Post Office and got a letter addressed to Louis Riel which he opened and read then calling for a new envelope he enclosed the letter in it—sealed it up and addressed it in imitation of the original address to Louis Riel—copying the Post mark of St. Jo. on it and removing the stamp from the old envelope to the one he addressed. Cool and not very honourable. He tore up the old envelope.

*Andrew Strang<sup>2</sup> was the party who detected this as he had swept out his office (where) O'D went in to read the letter & went in the store to speak to some one. He gathered up all the pieces & pasted them together and Mr. Bannatyne gave them to Riel who went for O'D—before all his council.<sup>3</sup>*

*Tuesday, 11th January, 1870*

Weather biting cold.

All the escaped prisoners except two have been recaptured—one of them W. F. Hyman had his feet so badly frozen that it is feared he will lose

<sup>1</sup> W. F. Hyman. See note 13 on p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> See note 3 on p. 182.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Begg's hand.

his toes. Mr. Riel who was present while the doctors were cutting and working at the injured parts on the man's foot had to leave the room—and as he afterwards remarked to a friend ["] I pitied that young man—what a position mine is to have to bear all this—but I cannot help myself.["]

The American Consul has been trying to get Riel to take in Major Robinson as Secretary and H. S. Donaldson as Adjutant—but so far without success—a pretty kettle of fish indeed. It only needs Stutsman as Comptroller of the Revenue Department & Cavalier Postmaster General to make the thing complete—eh bien! we will see what we will see.

A meeting of the MacTavish Fire Engine Company No. 1. was called for this evening but afterwards postponed.

John Fraser<sup>1</sup> of Kildonan Parish is in favor of the Provisional Government and is to do his best to convince his people to be of the same mind.

The Orders of the Provisional Government mentioned on the 8th is [sic] said to be incorrect and were not intended to be circulated. Riel has sent a guard to collect all those that have been distributed and will it is said issue new Orders or corrected ones. Riel became aware of the dishonourable trick played on him by O'Donohue—he was very indignant at it and said "I will not put this letter where O'Donoghue can see it Oh! no of course not" smiling. Riel in every action shows an honest purpose for the good of his country—and American influence is no influence with him.

The Mail went out as usual.

There were several French dances to-night.

*Wednesday, 12th January, 1870*

The weather to-day was biting cold.

Hyman the escaped prisoner who had his feet badly frozen will it is feared lose his toes—other parts of his body also are injured by frost.

Two correspondents of newspapers from Canada named Mr. Robertson of the *Toronto Telegraph* and Mr. Cunningham of the *Toronto Globe*<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Fraser, 1822–1920, brother of William Fraser. See note 3 on p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> John Ross Robertson, 1841–1918, Canadian journalist, founder of *Daily Telegraph*, 1866 and of *Evening Telegram*, 1876. Robert Cunningham, 1836–1874, Scot; came to Canada in 1868; returned to Manitoba in 1870 to found *The Manitoban* with William Coldwell; was Member of Parliament for Marquette, 1872–1874. See No. xvii and No. xix below.



arrived to-day and were immediately taken by Riel into Fort Garry. Riel said he thought that they looked more like Americans than anything else. Major Robinson of the "New Nation" interested himself in their behalf and got permission to show them around. Mr. Le May and Col. Stutsman arrived from Pembina to-day—the latter brought his traps intending to remain in the Settlement for a month or two. Stutsman is up to something and it is to be hoped he will get sold. Le May professes to be outside of the American party and in favor of annexation to Canada. There was a meeting of Kildonan and St. John Parishes in favor of joining the Provisional Government with the Hudson Bay Company at the head of it. Colin Inkster and John Fraser were appointed delegates to visit other parishes and tell them what St. Johns and Kildonan were doing. It is not believed the H.B.C. will resume the sovereignty of the country again.

The American flag was hoisted to-day over George Emerling's Hotel where Oscar Malmgren the Consul resides—at half mast high in memory of the death of Stanton the American Ex Secretary of War.<sup>1</sup>

*Thursday, 13th January, 1870*

The weather still very sharp and frosty.

The American flag flying at Emerlings is causing some excitement amongst the French they misconstruing the motive and believing it as a sign in favor of annexation to the States—the French as a rule being not in favor of annexation.

Col. Stutsman begins to find his game about played out in the settlement and instead of remaining a month or two as he intended he has made up his mind to leave for Pembina to-morrow. Poor Americans they have played their hand too openly and not too well. The correspondents from Canada Messrs. Robertson & Cunningham had a good time last evening in company with the Americans in town at Bob O'Lone's Saloon—drinking was the order of the evening and annexation the principal toast of the evening. Annexation to the States however instead of to Canada.

The American flag still flies at Emerlings—let it fly it is doing good in rousing the French in opposition to anything like annexation to the States.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note.

<sup>1</sup> Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, 1861–1869, under Presidents Lincoln and Johnson.

Le May is endeavouring to get elected as a councillor amongst the French but it is not likely that he will succeed.

John Fraser has gone down towards the Stone Fort to agitate the question of joining the Provisional Government in the manner spoken of yesterday. Colin Inkster is to go up the Assiniboine to-morrow. One of the Nolins and some others of the French in company it is said with Pierre Lavellier<sup>1</sup> have gone towards White Horse Plains to get the names of the people in favor of a Crown Colony.

Mail arrived as usual.

A meeting of the MacTavish Fire Engine Coy No. 1. took place this evening.

The Mail bag from Pembina has twice come in of late with the staple broken—it was done in such a way as hardly to be found out—*strange!*

*Friday, 14th January, 1870*

Weather blustering and cold.

The correspondents from Canada left on their return home this forenoon by order of Riel. Mr. Robertson speaks in favor of Mr. McDougall, Mr. Cunningham against him, and both denounce Riel in strong terms. Messrs. Wm. & Robert Tait, Mr. Wm. Fraser and Mr. Robert Morgan<sup>2</sup> met in the office of Bannatyne & Begg to discuss the state of the country—the four gentlemen named seemed in favor of uniting the people and asking the H.B.C. whether it would take hold of the reigns [sic] of government—if it should not for the people themselves then to join in forming a Provisional Government. They said that next Wednesday was the day appointed by the English delegates to meet those from the French side. It is said there is a split up amongst Riel's Councillors on account of his overbearing manner with them—how far it will go cannot yet be told—one or two of his councillors have left him it is certain.

Mr. Thos. Truthwaite<sup>3</sup> arrived in town from St. Andrews and reports that the people there do not feel inclined to move one way or another at present—they are too jealous and frightened. Colin<sup>5</sup> left for up the Assiniboine to-day.

De. Salaberry is reported to intend leaving for Canada on Monday.

There was a dance given at B. Develins this evening 5/- (stg) admittance. American flag still flying at Emerlings—let it fly.

<sup>1</sup> Probably Pierre Léveillé. See note 2 on p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 on p. 189.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in another hand.

<sup>5</sup> Presumably Colin Inkster.

Rumors are still going about and are gaining belief that letters in the mail are tampered with at Pembina.

Col. Stutsman left to-day for Pembina disgusted!!!

*Saturday, 15th January, 1870*

Weather in the morning was very cold but towards noon it became warmer and very pleasant and continued so all day till evening when it became again very sharp and frosty.

It became rumored amongst certain parties who happened to be at Fort Garry that certain papers were on the way from the British & American parliaments—one of the Nolins amongst the rest who had an interview with Gov. MacTavish. Angus McKay<sup>1</sup> hearing the rumor and understanding from Nolin whom he met that Hardisty had been gone some days for these documents and knowing as a certainty that Hardisty had only left the fort on Thursday morning early he McKay thought it strange and went to Governor MacTavish and had an interview with that gentleman which resulted as he had heard that Mr. Hardisty had been concealed in the Fort first by Riel and afterwards sent in charge of one of the guard under Riel early on Thursday morning “secretly” (being covered up in the sled) for the purpose of obtaining the despatches. When this became known to one or two they determined on quietly sending off some decidedly matter of fact and courageous men and intercepting the papers before they passed into Mr. Riel’s hands. The whole thing was rapidly concocted and acted upon. The American consul Oscar Malmoras was at Fort Garry this morning in council with some of the French. The Americans are rapidly losing grounds [sic] if they ever had any.

Col. De Salaberry paid a visit to Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne’s house and spent a pleasant social evening.

The mail went out as usual.

American flag still flying.

*Sunday, 16th January, 1870*

The weather turned very cold and blustering and continued so most of the day.

<sup>1</sup> Angus McKay ; probably that Augustin, son of James McKay and Maguerite Gladu, baptized at St. François-Xavier in 1837 ; a member with Charles Nolin of the anti-Riel group of this time ; later member of Legislative Assembly of Manitoba ; probably a brother of James McKay.



This morning John F. Grant, Angus McKay and Pierre Laveiller<sup>1</sup> left Fort Garry on their way towards Pembina to intercept the documents Mr. Hardisty had secretly left to procure. They proceeded on quickly leaving one of the Nolins behind them to work up people to join them on their way back.

About the middle of the day they got as far as Wm. Dease's house where they met Jos. Millien and the latter with others then agreed to join the party on their return with the papers.

Grant and his two friends then went on as far as Scratching River where they camped to await the coming of Hardisty.

Two of the party kept watch during the night and near midnight Hardisty and his guard came along. Mr. Angus McKay was the first to meet Hardisty whom he asked if he had the papers he went for in his possession. Hardisty looked surprised but answered that he had. Mr. McKay then demanded them from him which was refused on the plea that he (Hardisty) had promised to deliver them to a certain party. Mr. McKay the others standing by [sic] then searched Mr. Hardisty and took the papers from him.

The man sent by Riel to guard Hardisty was then taken prisoner. Mr. Hardisty stated that the trip from Pembina to Scratching River had been as hard a one as he ever had experienced. The party waited some hours and then proceeded on their return to Fort Garry. The prisoner (Riel's man) tried to escape but Grant went after him and presented a pistol at him—told him on pain of death to stop which he accordingly did.

Usual Services to-day.

*Monday, 17th January, 1870*

Mr. Riel having heard of Grant's trip went after them to-day & stopped at a house of one La Certe<sup>2</sup>—he brought men with him and it is said he had posted others along the road to Fort Garry.

While Jos. Millien and others were waiting for the coming of Grant & the others—they got up a wedding at the house of Laboncan Dauphinies [sic],<sup>3</sup> the bridegroom being over 75 years of age and the bride between thirty and forty.

<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on p. 248 and note 1 on p. 261. The third member was Pierre Léveillé, not Lavallée, as Morice thought (A. G. Morice, *Red River Insurrection*, p. 209).

<sup>2</sup> Probably Louis Lacerte. See note 2 on p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> Laboucane Dauphinais; possibly a brother of François-Xavier. See note 2 on p. 166.

During the day Louis Thibault the brother of Grand Vicaire Thibault[,] old man Marion and others arrived at Laboncan Dauphines. The object of their visit being to join the Grant party on their return to Fort Garry. The bride and bridegroom now left for the church at La Rivière Salle to be married which they were Father or Rev. Mr. Richot<sup>1</sup> performing the ceremony—the charges were paid by the friends & neighbours of the married pair and the whole party returned to the house of Laboncan Dauphines where the invited guests were beginning to assemble.

A supper was prepared of which all present partook after which dancing commenced and went on briskly.

During the evening Messrs. Grant McKay Laveiller with Hardisty and their prisoner arrived at Laboncan's house—and on their arrival had supper—they then danced a little and afterwards laid down for a sleep.

They had not gone to sleep very long when two men came to the door and began to ask for their comrade "Grant's prisoner". Laveiller hearing the noise went down stairs and asked one of the men—who sent him? The man first said the council but afterwards on Laveiller disputing with him he said it was Riel and that he had been sent to look after the man they had prisoner. Laveiller then said—["] Go to Riel and say that Laveiller has both Mr. Hardisty & the papers and his guard as prisoner in this house and that if he wants them to come and take them.["] Riel all this time unknown to Laveiller stood outside the open door about five or six yards off armed with a revolver and sword and could have shot Laveiller had he wished it as he (Riel) was hid by the darkness of the night. Riel's two men were therefore sent about their business the door shut, and the dancing went on as usual—and was kept up all night till morning. Riel's man the prisoner danced as heartily as anyone present. In the early part of the day before Riel started after Grant's party he sent an order on R. C. Burdicks (H.B.C.) store for a pair of trowsers—which Burdick declined to deliver without the money—on this Riel visited the store and in Burdick's absence began to look out a pair of trowsers which on Burdick's returning at the moment he offered to pay for. Burdick refused the money on the plea that it was stolen from the H.B.C. and

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Noël-Joseph Ritchot, 1825-1905, came to Red River from Quebec in 1862; *curé* of St. Norbert, 1865-1905. See L.-A. Prud'homme, *Monseigneur Noël-Joseph Ritchot* (Winnipeg, 1928). It is curious that Begg had not mentioned him before, as he had played a large part in events since October, and was to play a larger part still.

ordered it is said Mr. Riel out of the shop. A party of Americans then assembled and abused Riel who it is said stood his ground and gave them back in their own coin.

Mr. Bannatyne to save further trouble furnished the pair of trowsers. The Americans it is reported were to take Riel prisoner for what they considered this insult by him on one of their countrymen but they did not dare to attempt it.

The Mail arrived as usual.

*Tuesday, 18th January, 1870*

Weather still cold and blustering. Grant[,] Laveiller and McKay after a good sleep and breakfast started in company with those assembled at Laboncan Dauphinie to go to Fort Garry.

Hardisty drove with Laveiller and Riel's man the prisoner had his own horse and jumper—there started from Laboncan's between 6 & 7 sleighs, which number was afterwards increased to over a dozen as they went along. As the party drove along they were overtaken by Riel in a cutter by himself—he tried to pass them putting his horse at full gallop—but he was prevented from going ahead. Before reaching La Rivière Salle they met Rev. Mr. Richot who stopped the party to speak to Laveiller but the latter told the Rev. gentleman that the road was not the proper place to speak that they were going to the Fort and he could see them there. The party then proceeded as far as La Rivière Salle where it was proposed to have a meeting at Jos. Hamlins House.<sup>1</sup> Riel here attempted to pass and go on but a man sprang before his horse and he was ordered to stop—he refused whereupon Laveiller told him he would make him. Riel on this jumped out of his cutter and told them that he would die first before they would compel him. Laveiller on this went up to him (Riel) and took him by the throat. Riel struggled with him—when Laveiller drew his revolver and was in the act of putting [it] at Riel's head when one or two stepped in and prevented it. Riel then said that he would not stop for a meeting there but would go on with the party as a friend and not as a prisoner. This all consented to and the party proceeded. Riel's horse having given out he took a seat in Grant's cutter and before reaching Fort Garry changed into Isiore Lagominière[']s sleigh.<sup>2</sup> At last the

<sup>1</sup> Probably Joseph Hamelin, 1832–1917, *métis*, storekeeper of St. Norbert, son of Solomon Hamelin, Councillor of Assiniboia.

<sup>2</sup> Elzéar Lagimonière, ?–1926; a grandson of the famous Jean-Baptiste Lagimonière, and thus a relative of Riel's.



party reached Fort Garry. Riel was the first to enter and the rest remained outside the walls. Riel shortly appeared and invited Hardisty into the Fort—thereupon Laveiller drove through the gate and Mr. Hardisty entered Dr. Cowan's house. Mr. McKay had the papers which he handed over to Mr. Smith. Dr. Cowan's House—the passage and mess room—were filled with men. Judge Black was there and opened the documents just brought in.

Mr. Riel in the meantime had a long interview with Mr. Smith.

Mr. or rather Col. De Salaberry was also in the Fort.

Messengers were despatched over the settlement calling on the people to assemble at Fort Garry to-morrow to hear the papers read. The greatest excitement exists.

It was agreed that a meeting public to the whole settlement should be held in Fort Garry the next day.

In the meantime Laveiller's party amongst the French insisted on keeping a guard in the Fort as well as Riel's men which was done.

The mail went out as usual.

Some of the shops in town were shut up to-day on account of the stirring events.

American flag still flying.

*Wednesday, 19th January, 1870*

In the morning the meeting spoken off [sic] in this Journal took place. Below is reported a printed account of the proceedings taken from the "New Nation" reported to that paper by Mr. Coldwell and considered correct.

#### MASS MEETINGS

Mr. Smith Canadian Commissioner, before the People

#### OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

(Reported for THE NEW NATION)

A grand mass meeting of the inhabitants of the Settlement, was held at Upper Fort Garry on the 19th inst. So many were present that the assembly had to be held in the open air, and this, when the thermometer stood at about 20 deg. below zero. The meeting lasted some five hours.

On motion of President Riel, seconded by Pierre Leviellé [sic], Mr. Thos. Bunn was called to the chair.

In opening the meeting the chairman expressed it as his opinion that this was the most important meeting ever held in the Settlement. The most vital

interests were at stake, and he therefore hoped that the utmost order and good humor would prevail.

Mr. Riel was elected interpreter ; and, on motion of Mr. Angus McKay, seconded by Mr. O'Donoghue, Judge Black was appointed secretary to the meeting.

Col. De Salaberry was present both days.

The Chairman introduced to the meeting Mr. Donald A. Smith, who came forward and read the following document, which he said, had been handed to him in Canada :—

“ Ottawa, Dec. 10th 1869.

“ Sir—I have the honor to inform you that His Excellency the Governor-General has been pleased to appoint you Special Commissioner to inquire into and report on the cause and extent of the armed obstruction offered at Red River, in the North West Territory, to the peaceable entrance of the Hon. W. McDougall, the gentleman selected to be Lieut. Governor of the Territory, and to bring about its union with Canada. Also to inquire into and report on the cause of the discontent and dissatisfaction at the proposed changes which now exist there. Also to explain to the inhabitants the principle[s] upon which the Government of Canada intend to govern the country, and remove any misapprehensions which may exist on the subject. And also to take such steps in concert with Hon. Mr. McDougall and Gov. MacTavish for effecting the peaceable transfer of the Government from the Hudson Bay authorities to the Government of the Dominion.

“ You are to consider this communication as a letter of appointment as Government Commissioner. With this letter you will receive a copy of the letter of instructions given to Mr. McDougall on leaving Ottawa, dated the 28th Sept. Also a copy of a further letter to Mr. McDougall dated the 7th inst., and a copy of the proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor-General, addressed to the inhabitants of the North West Territory by command of Her Majesty.

“ You will proceed with all despatch to Pembina and arrange with Mr. McDougall as to your future course of action, and then go on to Fort Garry, and take such steps as after such consultation, may seem most expedient. You will, of course, consult with Governor Mactavish, and endeavour to arrange one concerted scheme between Mr. McDougall, the Hudson Bay authorities, and yourself for the pacification of the country.

“ As the information coming here is necessarily imperfect, and the circumstances at Red River are continually changing, it is not considered expedient to hamper you with more specific instructions.

“ You will therefore act, according to the best of your judgment, with Mr. McDougall, and keep me fully informed as to the progress of events there.

You will also offer suggestions as to the best mode of dealing with the Indian tribes in the country.

" I have the honor to be, etc.

" JOSEPH HOWE "

" Sec'y of State for the Provinces".<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Riel translated the letter into French.

Mr. Smith then read the following letter sent by the Governor-General of Canada, to him (Smith) personally. It was handed to him in Ottawa :

OTTAWA 12 Dec, 1869

" My dear Mr. Smith,

I learn with satisfaction that you have placed your services at the disposal of the Canadian Government, and that you are proceeding to Red River to give the parties that are at variance the benefit of your experience—— "

Mr. Riel—Is that letter public or private?

Mr. Smith—It is a letter to me as Commissioner.

Some confusion ensued, several people spoke at the same time, and ultimately the chairman ordered silence and said that the document was public and ought to be read.

Mr. Smith continued the reading of the letter :—" Give the parties that are at variance the benefit of your experience, influence and mediation.

" In my capacity as Her Majesty's representative in the British North American possessions, I have addressed letters to Gov. Mactavish, the Protestant Bishop of Rupert's Land, and the Vicar-General, who acts in lieu of the Roman Catholic Bishop, during his presence in Rome. I have sent them copies of the message received by telegraph from Her Majesty's Secretary of State which forms the staple of the proclamation addressed to her subjects, in the North West Territory. You will observe that it calls upon all who have any complaints to make, or wishes to express, to address themselves to me as Her Majesty's representative. And you may state, with the utmost confidence that the Imperial Government has no intention of acting otherwise—or permitting others to act otherwise—than in perfect good faith towards the inhabitants of the Red River district of the North West.

" The people may rely upon it that respect and protection will be extended to the different religious persuasions (loud cheers)—that titles to every description of property will be perfectly guarded (renewed cheers)—and that all the franchises which have existed, or which the people may prove themselves qualified to exercise, shall be duly continued or liberally conferred.

" In declaring the desire and determination of Her Majesty's Cabinet, you may very safely use the terms of the ancient formula, that ' Right shall be done in all cases.'

<sup>1</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12). A sentence is omitted in this copy in Begg's *Journal*, after "by command of Her Majesty." This runs: "These will enable you to speak authoritatively on the subject of your mission."



"Wishing you a prosperous journey and all success in your mission of peace and good will

"I remain faithfully yours

"JOHN YOUNG".<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Riel—It is not signed "Governor".

Mr. Smith—It is written and signed "in my capacity as Her Majesty's representative".

Mr. Riel translated the letter into French.

Mr. Smith then asked Vicar-General Thibault [sic] for some letters from the Government of Canada to Gov. Mactavish and the Bishop of Rupert's Land, which had been confided to his (the Vicar-General's) care in Canada. I, said Mr. S. have been authorized by Gov. Mactavish to make this request. The document I ask for is an official one, addressed by the Governor-General of Canada to Mr. Mactavish. In explanation, I would say, that the Vicar-General and Colonel De Salaberry preceded me from Canada by a few days. It was intended that we should have had communication on the way; and that being the case for convenience sake the letters were given to the Vicar-General. The letter to Mr. Mactavish is explanatory of the views of the Canadian Government and show what the Queen wished to say to her faithful subjects here.

Mr. Riel—I do not want the document to be read (Cries of "We will hear it," and cheers)

Chairman—Silence.

Judge Black protested against the document being withheld from the meeting.

A voice—Who has the documents? (Cheers)

Another voice—Mr. O'Donoghue has them (Cheers)

Chairman—The Vicar-General states that Mr. O'Donoghue seized them and has got them.

A voice—We want them. (Cheers)

Mr. Riel—I ask the Vicar-General if either of the letters alluded to belong to Mr. Smith.

The Vicar-General—No.

Mr. Smith—Mr. Mactavish authorized me to ask for his letter.

Bishop Machray—I will ask my letter from Mr. O'Donoghue and I think he will give it.

Judge Black urged the production of the letter.

Mr. Riel replied that the Judge was out of his role as Secretary in addressing the meeting.

Judge Black said he had no idea that Mr. Riel could teach him his duty.

The Chairman addressed the meeting and Mr. O'Donoghue protested.

<sup>1</sup> This letter was not printed in the official papers. Sir John Young, 1807-1876, Administrator and Governor-General of Canada, 1868-1872; created Baron Lisgar in 1870.

Judge Black—If business is not allowed to proceed regularly I will resign.

Mr. O'Donoghue complained that the Chairman would not allow him to address the meeting.

The Chairman said he had no objection to Mr. O'Donoghue doing so when in order.

Mr. Bannatyne—As a Red River settler I ask the Chairman to put the question to the meeting as to whether Mr. O'Donoghue is to be requested to produce the letters.

The Chairman put the question in the form of a resolution and it was carried amid cheers.

Mr. Bannatyne, in the name of the people of Red River, then demanded of the Vicar-General that he should ask Mr. O'Donoghue for the letters.

Mr. Riel seconded the demand.

The Vicar-General made the required demand.

Mr. O'Donoghue—Since the demand is made in its present form I may say that I took the letters by order and delivered them to Secretary Schmidt.

Some debate ensued as to whether it would not do to hunt up these letters next day. But ultimately, Mr. O'Donoghue and Pierre Leviellé went in search of the documents to the Secretary's desk and found them. He then delivered them up at the meeting.

Before reading any additional documents, Mr. Smith said he wanted one which was in Mr. Mactavish's possession and have [sic] been sent for.

Mr. Riel moved that any other documents Mr. Smith had to produce should be read in the meantime.

Bishop Machray moved in amendment that if it did not suit Mr. Smith to proceed with the reading, he be allowed to wait the arrival of the document he wanted.

Rev. Mr. Black<sup>1</sup> seconded the amendment.

Mr. Smith—The paper I want is a proclamation from the Governor-General copies of which came into the Settlement, but where they are I do not know. Archdeacon McLean said that if Mr. Smith was willing it might be well to hear what he had to read at once.

Mr. Smith—One of the documents I have is a copy of a paper delivered to me. It is a communication from the Queen, our Sovereign. It is the telegraph message referred to in one of the papers addressed to me, and which was put into my hands in Canada, very shortly after being received from England. It is a message from Earl Granville to Sir John Young, dated "Nov. 26 [25]". "Make what use you think best of what follows:—" The Queen has heard with surprise and regret that certain misguided persons have banded together to oppose by force the entry of the future Lieut-Governor into our territory

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend John Black, 1818-1882, Presbyterian minister who had come to Kildonan in 1851, the first of his Church in the North-West.

in Red River. Her Majesty does not distrust the loyalty of her subjects in that Settlement; and can only ascribe to misunderstanding or misrepresentation their opposition to a change planned for their advantage.

"She relies on your Government to use every effort to explain whatever misunderstandings may have arisen,—to ascertain their wants, and conciliate the good will of the people of Red River Settlement. But in the meantime she authorizes you to signify to them the sorrow and displeasure with which she views the unreasonable and lawless proceedings which have taken place; and her expectation that if any parties have desires to express or complaints to make respecting their condition and prospects, they will address themselves to the Governor-General of Canada.

"The Queen expects from her representative that as he will be always ready to receive well founded grievancies so will he exercise all the power and authority she entrusted to him, in the support of order and the suppression of unlawful disturbances" (Cheers).

On motion of Mr. Robt. Tait, seconded by Mr. Mercer,<sup>1</sup> the meeting adjourned till ten o'clock the following day.

At the close of the meeting Mr. John Burke jumped up and demanded the release of the prisoners. Mr. Riel said not just now. Some in the [sic] cried out yes! yes! they must be released. On this the French flew to their arms and there was a general skidaddle amongst a good many of the English—the act was premature on the part of Burke—but everything was quieted down and the meeting separated quietly.<sup>2</sup> Laveiller still keeps a guard inside the Fort as well as Riel.

*Thursday, 20th January, 1870*

Weather to-day was not quite so cold as yesterday but still cold enough to make it disagreeable standing out any length of time in the open air. The meeting to-day at Fort Garry was called for ten O'Clock but for some reason or another it did not take place till noon. Mr. Burke before the meeting commenced arose and said that he was sorry he spoke as he did last evening—the sentiments were not his own but what were put into him by another party to say. It was considered by everyone that during the present doubtful state of affairs it would be premature to let loose the prisoners. Below is a correct report of the day's proceedings from the *New Nation* reported by Mr. Coldwell.

<sup>1</sup> F. C. Mercer; not otherwise identified.

<sup>2</sup> *New Nation*, January 21, 1870. For the telegram, see *United Kingdom: Correspondence relative to the Recent Disturbances in Red River* (London, 1870).



At noon the following day a still larger assemblage gathered at Fort Garry *further*<sup>1</sup> to hear Mr. Commissioner Smith.

Mr. Thos. Bunn was again called to the chair.

Messrs. C. Nolin, Grant, Jose Milien, Touasaint Lucie,<sup>2</sup> Vermet,<sup>3</sup> C. Laronce,<sup>4</sup> Xavier Paget<sup>5</sup> and C. Lafontaine<sup>6</sup> were appointed to keep order in the crowd.

Mr. Riel moved that Judge Black resume the office of Secretary.

Judge Black declined.

On motion of Mr. R. McBeath,<sup>7</sup> seconded by Mr. A. Dahl,<sup>8</sup> Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne was appointed Secretary.

Father Lestanc<sup>9</sup> came forward and said, amid cheers—We have been good friends to this day in the whole Settlement; and I want to certify here that we will be good friends to-night.

Mr. Riel translated the remarks into French and Rev. Hy. Cochrane into Indian.

Mr. Smith again came forward to finish reading the documents. This he said, is a letter from the Governor-General to Mr. Mactavish:

“ Government House, Ottawa,  
December 6, 1869

W. Mactavish, Esq., Gov. of Assiniboia.

“ Sir—I had the honor to address you in my capacity as representative of the Queen and Governor-General of Her Majesty’s British North American possessions, and enclosed for your information a copy of a message received from Earl Granville, in reply to the account which I sent officially of the events occurring in Red River Settlement. The message conveys the matured opinion of the Imperial Cabinet. The proclamation I have issued is based on it; and you will observe that it refers all who have desires to express or

<sup>1</sup> Marginal insertion.

<sup>2</sup> Toussaint Lussier, 1832–?; of St. Boniface; a councillor of Riel’s in 1885. See Schmidt’s *Memoirs*, No. xv below.

<sup>3</sup> One of ten brothers Vermette, six of whom would be of age, Antoine, Louis, Pierre, Alexandre, Norbert, Joseph, Sr., *métis* of St. Norbert.

<sup>4</sup> Possibly Charles Laroque, 1817–1900.

<sup>5</sup> Xavier Pagée, 1833–1912; *métis* of St. François-Xavier, and representative of that parish in the Convention of Forty, January, 1870.

<sup>6</sup> Calixte Lafontaine, 1847–1918 (?), *métis* of St. François-Xavier.

<sup>7</sup> Robert McBeth, 1815–1886, Selkirk colonist of Kildonan, Councillor of Assiniboia and Justice of the Peace.

<sup>8</sup> Not identified, but the Dahls were Red River people of Norwegian descent.

<sup>9</sup> The Reverend Father Jean-Marie Lestanc, O.M.I., 1830–1912; French; came to North-West in 1855; administrator of the diocese of St. Boniface in absence of Bishop Taché.

complaints to make, to refer to me, as invested with authority on behalf of the British Government. And the inhabitants of Ruperts Land, of all claims and persuasions, may rest assured that Her Majesty's Government has no intention of interfering with, or setting aside, or allow others to interfere with the religions, the rights or the franchise hitherto enjoyed, or to which they may hereafter prove themselves equal (loud cheers).

" Make what use you think best of this communication, and of the enclosed.

" I have the honor to be

" Your most obd't and humble serv't,

" JOHN YOUNG."<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Smith—The next document I will read is a communication from Mr. Howe to Mr. MacDougall. I read it, not because I have any connection with Mr. McDougall, but because it is referred to in my commission—

" Office of the Sec'y of

" State for the Provinces,"

OTTAWA, Dec 7 1869

" Sir—I had the honor to address to you despatches on the 19th and 20th of November, but for fear they have miscarried I duplicate them to you. I have the honor also to send you an order-in-council, passed this day on the subject of Customs duties.

" You will now be in a position to assure the residents of the North West Territories—

" 1. That all their civil and religious liberties will be sacredly respected.

" 2. That all their properties, rights and privileges of every kind, as enjoyed under the government of the Hudson Bay Company, will be continued.

" 3. That in granting titles to land now occupied by the settlers, the most liberal policy will be pursued.

" 4. That the present tariff of customs duties will be continued for two years from the 1st of January next, except in the case of spirituous liquors, as specified in the order in council above alluded to.

" 5. That in forming your council the Governor-General will see that not only the Hudson Bay Company, but the other classes of the residents are fully and fairly represented.

" 6. That your Council will have the power to establish municipal self-government at once, and in such manner as they may think most beneficial for the country.

" 7. That the country will be governed as in the past, by British law, and according to the spirit of British justice.

" 8. That the present government is to be considered as merely provisional and temporary, and that the Government of Canada will be prepared to

<sup>1</sup> This letter does not appear in the printed papers.

submit a measure to Parliament, granting a liberal constitution, as soon as you, as Governor, and your Council, have had the opportunity of reporting fully on the wants and requirements of the Territory.

"You had, of course, instructions on all the above mentioned points, except the tariff, before you left Ottawa. But it has been thought well that I should repeat them to you in this authoritative form.

"Trusting that before long you may be enabled to carry these liberal propositions into practice in administering the affairs of the North West,

"I have the honor, etc,

"JOSEPH HOWE"

"Sec'y of State for the Provinces.

"Hon. W. McDougall, Pembina".<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Riel translated the above.

Mr. Smith said—As reference has repeatedly been made in these papers to Mr. McDougall, I may say, that neither with that gentleman nor any of his party have I any, even the slightest acquaintance, having never seen him nor any of his people, save for a few minutes on the road from Pembina to Georgetown (cheers). And at this present moment I have not written a single word either to him or any of his party. My commission is simply alone, from the Government of Canada. Though personally unknown to you, I am as much interested in the welfare of this country as others. On both sides I have a number of relations in this land (cheers) not merely Scotch cousins, but blood relation[s]. Besides that, my wife and her children are natives of Rupert's Land (cheers). Hence though I am myself a Scotchman, people generally will not be surprised that I should feel a deep interest in this great country and its inhabitants (cheers). I am here today in the interests of Canada, but only in so far as they are in accordance with the interests of this country (hear, hear, and cheers). Under no other circumstances would I have consented to act (cheers). As to the Hudson Bay Company, my connection with that body is, I suppose, generally known : but I will say that if it could do any possible good to the country, I would, at this moment, resign my position in that Company. I sincerely hope that my humble efforts may in some measure, contribute to bring about peaceably, union and entire accord among all classes of the people of this land (cheers).

Mr. Smith next read the following document, which was printed in English and French :—

"Office of the Sec'y of State for the Provinces".

"Sir—As you have been appointed Lieut.-Governor of the North West Territories, in anticipation of the formal transfer of these Territories by Her Majesty to the Dominion of Canada, and as it is expected that such transfer

<sup>1</sup> This letter was not printed.



will be made within the course of the next two or three months, I have the honor, by command of His Excellency the Governor General, to inform you that [it] is desirable that no time should be lost in making the necessary preliminary arrangement for the organisation of the Government of the Territories.

" 2. With this view I am to instruct you to proceed with all convenient speed to Fort Garry, in order that you may effectually superintend the carrying out of the preliminary arrangements indicated in the preceding paragraph and be ready to assume the government of the territories on their actual transfer to Canada.

" 3. On your arrival at Fort Garry, you will place yourself in communication with Mr. Mactavish, the Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, and notify him of your appointment. You will at the same time, offer seats in your Council to Mr. Mactavish and to Mr. Black, or other chief judicial officer of the Hudson Bay Company now in the Territory. And should either or both of these gentlemen decline to accept office, you will submit for the consideration of His Excellency, the names of one or two other officers of the Company whom you consider eligible to act as members of the Council. You will at the same time submit the names of several of the residents, and of their character and standing in the Territory unconnected with the Company, qualified to act as Councillors, giving particulars respecting them and stating their comparative merits.

" 4. You will have the goodness to report with all convenient speed for the information of His Excellency, on the state of the laws now existing in the Territories, transmitting copies of any laws, ordinances or regulations of the Company now in force there, together with a full report as to the mode of administering justice, the organization of the courts, number and mode of appointment of Justices of the Peace, and the plans, arrangements, and means adopted for keeping the peace there.

" 5. In preparing the report on the matters referred to in the preceding paragraph it will be well that you meet and confer with the chief judicial officer of the Company in the Territories.

" 6. You will have the goodness to report also upon the system of taxation, if any, in force in the Territories, the system of licensing shops, taverns, etc., the mode of regulating or prohibiting the sale of wines, spirituous and malt liquors. Further, as to the mode of keeping up the roads ; and generally, on the municipal organization, if any, existing in the Territories.

" 7. You will also make a full report upon the state of the Indian tribes now in the Territories, their names, numbers, and claims, the system heretofore pursued by the Hudson Bay Company in dealing with them, accompanied by any suggestions you may desire to offer with reference to their protection and the improvement of their condition.

" 8. You will have the goodness to report also on the nature and amount of the currency or circulating medium now employed in the Territories, and of the probable requirements of the Territories in that respect for the future.

" 9. You will also report on the system of education, if any, which obtains in the Territories.

" 10. You will also please to report as to such lands in the Territories as it may be desirable to open up at once for settlement, transmitting a plan of such survey as may be necessary, with an estimate of the cost of survey, a statement of the condition of grants of land and settlement. The plan should show the number of townships it is proposed to lay out at once, the size and position of the townships, and the size of the lots, marking the necessary surveys for churches, schools, roads and other purposes.

" 11. You will also report upon the regulations at present existing between the Hudson Bay Company and the different religious bodies in the Territories.

" 12. You will also report as to the number of officers now employed by the Hudson Bay Company in the administration of their Government of the Territories, stating the duties and salaries of such officers and specifying those who should in your opinion be retained. You will also report as to the number of persons whom it will be necessary hereafter to employ in the administration of the Government; and you will report generally on all subjects connected with the welfare of the Territory upon which it may seem to you desirable to communicate with the Government of the Dominion.

" 13. It is desirable that you should take immediate measures for the extension of the Telegraph system from the Territories to Pembina, and for its connection at that place with the system of the American Telegraph Company or Companies, making any provisional arrangements for that purpose which may be necessary, and forwarding a copy of such arrangements to this Department for confirmation to His Excellency.

" I have the honor to be, etc.

" E. A. MEREDITH " Sec'y of State.

" Hon. W. McDougall, C.B., Ottawa."<sup>1</sup>

After the reading of this document an adjournment for half an hour was proposed and adopted.

Business being resumed, Mr. Riel, seconded by Mr. Bannatyne, moved that 20 representatives shall be elected by the English population of Red River to meet 20 other representatives of the French population, on Tuesday the 25th inst, at noon, in the Court House, with the object of considering the subject of Mr. Smith's commission, and to decide what would be best for the welfare of the country—Carried.

<sup>1</sup> See C.S.P., 1870 (12).

Cheers were then given for Father Lestanc, Bishop Machray, Father Ri[t]chot, Mr. Riel, Mr. O'Donoghue, and the Commissioners.

A voice—That resolution seems to cast a doubt on Mr. Smith's commission. We do not doubt it.

Mr. Riel and Mr. O'Donoghue—We accept the commission as genuine and are merely to consider what is to be done under it.

On motion of Judge Black, seconded by Mr. O'Donoghue, it was resolved that a committee consisting of Thos. Bunn, Rev. J. Black, the Bishop of Rupert's Land, John Sutherland, and John Frazer, be appointed to meet and apportion the English representatives for the different parishes in the Settlement, and to determine the mode of election. Committee to meet to-morrow at noon at the Bishop's.

Father Ri[t]chot said that he was glad to be present, with the Bishop of Rupert's Land and the Clergy of various denominations. All, he believed, came there with the best interests of the people at heart. They came there to see that order and good feeling prevailed and to influence the people as far as they could in the direction of what was right and just (loud cheers). The Clergy were also citizens, and as such, they were glad to be present, and promote those objects (cheers).

Bishop Machray was sure that every one would heartily respond to the kind feeling expressed, and do what was possible to promote union and concord (loud cheers). The rights of all present were the same and on all reasonable propositions there could not be very much difference of opinion (cheers). For his part he had the greatest hope that their coming together on that occasion, and their gathering next week, as proposed, would lead to a happy settlement of public affairs (cheers). And therefore he hoped we would be as united in the future as we had been in the past (loud and repeated cheers).

Mr. Riel then addressed the meeting as follows: Before this assembly breaks up, I cannot but express my feelings, however briefly. I came here with fears. We are not yet enemies (loud cheers) but we came very near being so. As soon as we understood each other, we joined in demanding what our English fellow subjects in common with us believe to be our just rights (loud cheers). I am not afraid to say our rights; for we all have rights (renewed cheers). We claim no half rights, mind you, but all the rights we are entitled to. Those rights will be set forth by our representatives, and, what is more, gentlemen, we will get them (loud cheers).<sup>1</sup>

The meeting then adjourned.

The crowd at Fort Garry to-day was much greater than yesterday and

<sup>1</sup> *New Nation*, January 21, 1870. These extracts are clipped and pasted in the Journal.



nearly all the houses inside were occupied by settlers French & English. It was a noted fact that only one or two of the Americans made their appearance amongst the crowd.

Mr. H. McKenney did not appear on either of the days.

The meeting was very orderly throughout and towards the end good feeling between all parties broke out in noisy joyous demonstrations at the prospects of a speedy union of the whole settlement.

The American flag is still flying at George Emerlings.

The mail bag came in empty to-day.

Towards the end of the meeting to-day the flag of the Provisional Government became foul of the mast and was lowered to be put to rights and hoisted again. It was a strange coincidence—some parties had brought flags (British) to hoist on the flag pole of the Fort instead of the one now flying there, and when they saw the Provisional flag lowered they thought it was the last of it—but it was not.

Laveiller insists on keeping his guard in the Fort as well as that of Riel's—until things are arranged.

*Friday, 21st January, 1870*

Weather still continues cold.

The gentlemen appointed to meet at Bishop Machray's met to-day and apportioned out the English speaking Parishes as follows—

Town of Winnipeg	1	delegate
St. John	1	„
Kildonan	2	„
St. Paul's	1	„
St. Andrews	3	„
St. Clements	2	„
St. Peters	2	„
St. James	2	„
Headingly	2	„
St. Anns	2	„
St. Margarets	1	„
St. Marys	1	„

The New Nation came out as usual to-day strong in favour of Annexation to the United States. The copies sent out through the Settlement gratis

are being returned in numbers (the people would not accept of them) and the circulation of the paper in the Settlement is likely to be small.

It was agreed to disband most of the French at Fort Garry to-day and only keep a small guard there, but a rumor came in that the Scotch settlers and others were preparing to come down and release the prisoners—this threw the whole thing back and the usual number of men were kept on but when afterwards it was found that the rumor was false it was agreed to disband tomorrow.

There was a dance given by Riel's party in Fort Garry in the Mess Room at Dr. Cowan's. A dancing party was also given at Hy. McDermots which went off well. John F. Grant—Pierre Laveiller & Angus McKay were there and professed themselves determined to stick up for the rights of the people as contained in Mr. Smith's papers. Baptiste Morin was also at the party.

*Saturday, 22nd January, 1870*

Weather continues cold and stormy.

It became known that Mr. Alfred Scott<sup>1</sup> a clerk with Henry McKenney was to be put forward by the American party in town.

A notice appeared in the *New Nation* in the shape of a paragraph that a meeting was to be held in the Engine House this evening—but no hour was given.

Mr. Hy. McDermot was spoken of as a candidate but as he did not wish to run, Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne determined to put himself forward. It was found however that the time of meeting was too short to get all the friends of the latter gentleman to attend.

It was reported that Riel and some of his men were having a merry time in the Fort. Riel it was said was tight but this is not credited as he is not known to go to excess although often reported so. Riel to-day took possession of the Mess Room in Dr. Cowan's in company with the guard from Laveiller's party—and it is said that Riel spoke in a very harsh manner to Dr. Cowan—this is not known to be true.

Laveiller is out looking after the elections on the French side and so is Riel.

The mail went out as usual to-day.

<sup>1</sup> Alfred H. Scott was considered an American but claimed to be of British birth. (See his letter to that effect in *New Nation*, March 18, 1870.) Certainly his proclivities were American and annexationist, as were those of his employer, Henry McKenney. He may have been a Roman Catholic, since he signed a Roman Catholic petition in 1869.

Most of the French were disbanded to-day only a small guard from both Riel's and Laveiller's parties remaining.

The meeting at the Engine House took place this evening—the room was crammed with Americans many of whom had little if any interest in the country. Major Robinson was appointed Chairman. Mr. Coldwell, Secretary. At about seven O'Clock the meeting commenced. A serious [sic: series] of resolutions were presented by R. C. Burdick as follows—

Whereas the present state of affairs that now exists in our Colony is not one that is calculated to ensure public confidence and prosperity and for the purpose of devising some measure to restore the same a council of 40 delegates from different portions thereof is to assemble on Tuesday the 25th instant and Whereas

We learn that Mr. Smith is empowered upon the part of Canada to make to this people certain concessions, or guarantees to us certain rights which we ask and which we hope will be conceded And Whereas

We the individuals comprising the meeting fully believe that in these concessions being made upon the part of Canada lies all our hope for a speedy relief from the present existing state of confusion and looking to a probability of the council deciding that Mr. Smith's promise may not be such as will warrant the possession immediately of this country by the Canadian Government in which event it will be necessary for that council to decide upon some form of Government to administer the Executive during the time intervening between this and the ultimate adoption or rejection by Canada of our offers.

And Whereas it being the opinion of the individuals comprising this meeting that the restoration by the Public of Governor MacTavish to the Executive to be aided by a Council elected by a popular vote—therefore be it resolved

The delegate who shall be chosen by the meeting to represent us in that council be instructed to use all honourable means that may lay in his power to bring about the result above mentioned.

Mr. Burdick stated he did not wish to dictate to the meeting but only laid the resolutions before it for discussion.

Mr. McKenney desired the Secretary to read them over again.

When this was done a division of the house was taking place most of the Americans being against the resolutions.

Then Mr. McKenney arose and said he had an additional clause to add to the resolutions which would he thought be agreed to by the meeting generally. The following was the additional clause referred to and



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which with the resolutions of Mr. Burdick were not dissented from by the meeting.

Or in the event of that object being unattainable that our delegate be instructed to use his best judgement in obtaining such other form of Government as may be in the meantime effective in maintaining peace and good order in the Settlement and the restoration of its prosperity.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Alfred Scott was then proposed as delegate—when Dr. Bird in amendment put forward the name of A. G. B. Bannatyne as a candidate for such.

It was proposed and agreed that the names of those present should be taken by the Secretary which was done.

Mr. Alexander Begg then stated that a show of hands should be had for the candidates at this meeting and that another day say Monday should be appointed for their election.

The names of those present were then taken as follows—for Alfred Scott:

1st George Emerling.	15th Henry Eck.
2nd J. F. O'Lone.	16th J. Johnston.
3rd John Lennon.	17th A. R. Gerald.
4th H. McKenney.	18th Wm. Chambers.
5th Wm. Cosgrove.	19th A. Sargent.
6th John Kennedy.	20th Capt. Robinson.
7th J. C. Kennedy.	21st J. Walker.
8th H. S. Donaldson.	22nd R. D. Campbell.
9th H. M. Robinson.	23rd R. C. Burdick.
10th John McKenney.	24th J. Mager.
11th B. Develin.	25th P. Poitras.
12th J. Backy.	26th J. W. Porter.
13th J. Cromarty.	27th G. B. Winship.
14th R. H. McLaughlin.	27 Total.

For A. G. B. Bannatyne:

1st Dr. Bird.	9th F. C. Mercer.
2nd [G.] Ellwood.	10th Wm. Drever.
3rd A. Klyne.	11th John Lane.

<sup>1</sup> Both resolution and amendment are given in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 243-245. Henry McKenney's desire for annexation is made evident by his action on this occasion.

4th O. Monchamp.	12th Hy McDerrmot.
5th H. Moncreiff.	13th Wm. Coldwell.
6th Alex. Begg.	14th F. Beaudreau.
7th [J.] Crowson.	15th H. Parissan.
8th J. McDerrmot.	16th A. Gringras. <sup>1</sup>

*Total 16*

Mr. Alexander Begg the seconder of Mr. Bannatyne now got up and demanded a poll on Monday for his candidate which was not heeded by the Chairman but drowned in cries for an adjournment.

The meeting therefore broke up.

Mr. Bannatyne's friends are determined to contest it and will do so on Monday.

*Sunday, 23rd January, 1870*

Weather cold & blustering.

Usual services took place to-day.

The Americans are jubilant over what they think their success last evening.

This night Dr. Schultz escaped from Fort Garry. It appears he removed the window of the room where he was confined and let himself down by tying together a sheet and a blanket and using it as a rope. He got over the wall and was tracked it is said to Drever's house—and a cutter was tracked leading away from the house.

*Monday, 24th January, 1870*

Weather not quite so cold but blustering.

Parties of French are off in pursuit of Dr. Schultz and it is feared that some lives will be lost if they overtake him.

Mr. Bannatyne's friends were at work to-day with good success in getting names in his favor as delegate to the convention on the 25th to-morrow—they are serving a protest against the proceedings of the meeting on the 22nd inst. The names of those residents and property holders in favor of Mr. Bannatyne will be handed in with the protest to the convention and it will be left to that body who is to be the delegate from the town. Many of Mr. B.'s friends were unable to attend the meeting of the 22nd. Mr. Alexander

<sup>1</sup> None of this list can be identified, other than those already noted, except J. Mager, 1805-1891, Alsatian German who came to Red River in 1860, and was an influential Catholic layman.

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Begg at the last moment put in his name as candidate for St. John Parish but Mr. James Ross had been at work and got pledges from most of the people so that A. Begg was beaten & James Ross is once more in the council of delegates. It is to be hoped he will not give the trouble he did in the last council. The Americans are savage at the persistency of Mr. Bannatyne.

Mr. Grant & Angus McKay are in for their Parishes—this is good and is deserved.<sup>1</sup> In case the people up the Portage La Prairie way do not send delegates there are four to be chosen from amongst the people to fill the places of those delegates not sent. The Lord Bishop of Rupert's Land at one time it is said thought of going as a delegate but afterwards thought it best not to go as the French might think the English Clergy had no right in the convention since their clergy were not likely to be in. To make up for the want of a mail on Thursday there was a very large one to-day.

Col. De Salaberry did not leave to-day for Canada.

*Tuesday, 25th January, 1870*

To-day was the most stormy one experienced this winter—drifting dreadfully. It was feared that a good many of the delegates to the convention would not be able to attend on account of the storm.

Ten O'Clock was the hour for the members to meet but it was nearly noon before the English delegates left [for?] Fort Garry.

Mr. Bannatyne went with them armed with the following documents.

Red River Settlement Jany. 24th 1870.

We the Undersigned Settlers in Red River residents and property holders in the Town of Winnipeg do hereby vote for appoint and send as our delegate Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne to the convention called for on Tuesday the 25th inst. and claim a majority in the election of our candidate for the Town.

1. C. J. Bird, Nominator.

2. Alex. Begg, Seconder.

3. Andrew McDermot.

4. Paul Lamalace.

5. A. Sutherland.

6. W. H. Lyons.

20. William Whittier.

21. A. Klyne.

22. Onis Monchamp.

23. Francis Logan.

24. James Farquharson.

25. Erick Anderson.

<sup>1</sup> That is, John F. Grant and Angus McKay, members of the French party opposed to Riel ; they had not in fact been returned for St. Charles, or St. François-Xavier, if indeed one or other ran in the latter parish.



- |  |                        |
|--|------------------------|
| 7. Honoré Parisian.                      | 26. Geo. Young.        |
| 8. Henry Coutu.                          | 27. Thomas Foulds.     |
| 9. Antoine Gringras, Jr.                 | 28. Henry McDermot.    |
| 10. Daniel Develin.                      | 29. F. C. Mercer.      |
| 11. Wm. Drever, Jnr.                     | 30. Daniel Donovan.    |
| 12. Henry Moncreiff.                     | 31. Wm. Drever.        |
| 13. Wm. Coldwell.                        | 32. John Lane.         |
| 14. Andrew Strang.                       | 33. Francois Beaudreu. |
| 15. John Sutherland, P[oint]. D[ouglas]. | 34. Paul Mourneau.     |
| 16. Alex. Logan.                         | 35. William Smith.     |
| 17. Joseph McDermot.                     | 36. Robert Stalker.    |
| 18. G. Elwood.                           | 37. James Ross.        |
| 19. Joseph Crowson.                      |                        |

Town of Winnipeg,  
Red River Settlement. January 24th 1870<sup>1</sup>

also

We the undersigned the Nominator Seconder and voters for Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne as delegate to the convention to be held at Fort Garry on the 25th inst. do hereby protest against the unfairness of the meeting that took place at the Engine House on the evening of the 22nd inst. No public meeting in the first place is usually called unless through a public authorized notice—in this the only notification we had of the meeting in question was from the following paragraph in the “New Nation” newspaper

The primary meeting for the election of  
the delegate from Winnipeg will be held  
at the Engine room on Saturday evening  
the 22nd inst.

The meeting is called a primary one and therefore many of the friends of Mr. Bannatyne did not attach much importance to it, considering that another meeting would be called for the election of the candidates.

At the meeting of the 22nd inst. Mr. Scott was nominated and in amendment the name of Mr. Bannatyne was put forward—the Seconder of Mr. Bannatyne stated in the beginning of the meeting that a show of hands should merely be taken for the candidates and that they should be properly elected on Monday following thus giving all the residents and property holders of the Town (many of whom were not present) a chance to vote.

At the latter part of the meeting the seconders of Mr. Bannatyne demanded a poll for that gentleman as the proceedings had been unfair to him and the Town generally—this was refused—we now protest against this proceeding

<sup>1</sup> None of these can be identified certainly, other than those already noted, except James Farquharson, who was the father of Mrs. Schultz, and John Sutherland of Point Douglas, to be distinguished from John Sutherland of East Kildonan.

and send in our candidate claiming an election for him—this being the only way left for us to take.

Under the circumstances we are willing as the town is only allowed one delegate to leave the decision in the hands of the convention as to who will be the representative of this Town. We enclose a list of those who voted for Mr. Scott, the greater part of whom it will be seen have little or no interest at stake in the Settlement.

- |                           |                                 |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. C. J. Bird, Nominator. | 11. A. Klyne.                   |
| 2. Alex. Begg, Seconder.  | 12. Honoré Parisian.            |
| 3. James Farquharson.     | 13. Antoine Gringrass, Jr.      |
| 4. Onis Monchamp.         | 14. Wm. Drever, Jr.             |
| 5. Daniel Develin.        | 15. Thomas Foulds.              |
| 6. W. H. Lyon.            | 16. Henry McDermot.             |
| 7. G. Ellwood.            | 17. F. C. Mercer.               |
| 8. Joseph Crowson.        | 18. John Lane.                  |
| 9. Joseph McDermot.       | 19. Francois Beaudreau.         |
| 10. Henry Moncrieff.      | 20. William Smith. <sup>1</sup> |

When the English delegates reached the Fort they found that all the French members had not arrived they therefore adjourned till half past three O'Clock in the afternoon.

At that hour they returned to the Fort but Mr. Riel told them they would have to put off the meeting of the Convention till 10.O'Clock the next morning. He said, ["I am sorry all our councillors have not come ["] and that they should be obliged to wait ["] but ["] he said ["we have waited long for you to join us.[]"] The Bishop of Rupert's Land is of the opinion that Americans should have no say in this matter as it is entirely British. He is in favor of Mr. Bannatyne going in as delegate and wrote a letter on the subject to Mr. B.

Mail went out as usual. Col. De Salaberry has not yet gone. Mr. Spence<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> What had happened was that the American party had called a *nominating* meeting had nominated their candidate, and then held that he had been *elected* by acclamation, no candidate having been nominated by another meeting. The Bannatyne party ought to have called a nominating meeting to choose an opposing candidate. Clearly, they were not familiar with the procedure of nomination and election, and, of course, no procedure was laid down or had ever been established in Red River. The results of this political smartness of the Americans were unfortunate as Alfred H. Scott was later made a delegate to Canada when an English half-breed or a moderate Canadian ought to have been sent.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Spence, 1832-1900, Scots Canadian; came to Canada in 1852 and to North-West in 1867; surveyor and clerical handy man, president of the Council of

delegate from Indian Settlement was taken prisoner to-day by Riel on suspicion of being a carrier of letters between suspected parties[;] he was afterwards released.

*Wednesday, 26th January, 1870*

The weather was clear but frosty to-day.

Between 10 & 11 O'Clock the convention of delegates sat again and appointed Judge Black (at motion of Mr. Riel) to be chairman of the meeting. Mr. Coldwell was secretary on the English side. Louis Schmidt Secretary on the French. James Ross was appointed interpreter of French into English and Louis Riel interpreter of English into French. The following were the delegates elected from the different parishes in the settlement.

On the English Side.

Parish	
Town of Winnipeg	Alfred Scott.
St. James	Robt. Tait.
	Geo. Flett.
Headingly	John Taylor.
	[W. F.] Lonsdale.
St. Anns	David Spence.
	Wm. Cummings.
High Bluff	Geo. Gunn.
St. Marys	Kenneth McKenzie.
St. Pauls	Dr. Bird.
St. Andrews	Judge Black.
	Alfred Boyd.
	Donald Gunn.
St. Clements	Thos. Bunn.
	Alex. McKenzie.
St. Peters	Rev. Hy. Cochrane.
	Thos. Spence.
St. Johns	James Ross.
Kildonan	John Sutherland.
	John Fraser. <sup>1</sup>

the "Republic" of Manitoba, 1868; later clerk of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba and pamphleteer on immigration.

<sup>1</sup> Some of the English delegates were members of the first convention, or have been otherwise identified. Some of the others are identified as follows:

George Flett, of St. James, brother-in-law of James Ross.



## On the French Side.

St. Pauls	Pierre Thibert.
	Alex. Pagée.
	Magnus Birston.
St. François Xavier	Xavier Pagée.
	Pierre Poitras.
St. Charles	Baptiste Beauchemin.
St. Boniface	W. B. O'Donohue.
	Ambroise La Pine [sic].
	Jos. Genton.
	Louis Schmidt.
St. Vital	Louis Riel.
	André Beauchemin.
St. Norbert	Pierre Paranteau.
	Norbert Laronce.
	B. Tournon.
Pointe Coupé	Louis Lascerte.
	P. Delorme.
Oak Point	Thos. Harrison.
	C. Nolin.
Pointe à Gruette	George Klyne. <sup>1</sup>

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John Taylor, 1834-1925, native ; later member of Legislative Assembly and Executive Council of Manitoba.

Probably William Thomas Lonsdale, of Headingly.

David Spence, not otherwise identified.

William Cummings, not otherwise identified.

George Gunn, see note 1 on p. 166.

Kenneth McKenzie, 1822-1911, Scots Canadian ; came to Red River in 1868, settled at Burnside, west of Portage la Prairie ; later member of Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Alfred Boyd, ?-1909, English, member of firm of Inkster and Boyd ; resident of "Redwood", St. Johns ; later first member of Executive Council of Manitoba ; member of Legislative Assembly, 1871-1874, for St. Andrew's.

Alexander McKenzie, not otherwise identified.

The Reverend Henry Cochrane, ?-1898, Indian clergyman, ordained 1859 ; incumbent of St. Peter's, 1867-1874.

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Thibert, Canadian ; a connection of the Reverend F. Belcourt ; probably the Pierre Thibert who died at Belcourt, North Dakota, in 1917.

Alexandre Pagée, of St. François-Xavier ; a brother-in-law of A. D. Lépine, and brother of Xavier Pagée.

Magnus Birston, 1828-?, of St. François-Xavier (St. Paul's was Baie St. Paul, to the west of St. François-Xavier) ; Councillor of Assiniboia.

Xavier Pagée, see note 5 on p. 271.

Baptiste Beauchemin, 1836-1900, son of Benjamin Beauchemin.

The question of Mr. Bannatyne's election was taken up—there being a contested question on the French side of the same nature it was agreed that each party should settle its own case. Both Mr. Scott and Mr. Bannatyne were present at the first part of the convention but after recess about half past three O'Clock in the afternoon neither of them attended and the matter was arranged as follows by the convention. That the decision should be left to a new election by the townspeople. Mr. Bannatyne however for the sake of peace would not hazard another election until it could be defined who had a right to vote. Not that he dreaded the mere matter of an election row but the bad impression such a row would have on the general peace of the Settlement. The contested election on the French side was between André Beauchemin, Angus McKay and John F. Grant.

Mr. Scott will take his seat as a delegate to-morrow.

Mr. Smith's papers were read at the convention this afternoon and that body is ready to proceed to regular business when it meets at half past ten O'Clock to-morrow morning. The MacTavish Fire Engine Coy. gave a ball this evening which passed off quietly. Jimmy from Cork<sup>1</sup> got drunk and becoming boisterous he was put into jail at Fort Garry.

The American flag was lowered and taken down to-day.

*Thursday, 27th January, 1870*

Weather cold but clear and frosty.

The delegates met again this morning at the Court House but the contested elections on the French side had not been decided so that the English delegates left about noon to get their dinners. After dinner Messrs. John F. Grant and Angus McKay left the council room in disgust, Riel being in favor of Baptiste [sic] Beauchemin taking the seat in the convention. Grant contended Beauchemin had only 20 votes while he

Ambroise-Didyme Lépine, see note 2 on p. 238.

Joseph Genton, see note 3 on p. 249.

Norbert Larance, *circa* 1822-?, *métis*.

Pierre Delorme, 1831-1912, *métis*, plains hunter and trader; later Member of Parliament for Provencher, and member of Legislative Assembly and Executive Council of Manitoba.

Thomas Harrison, *circa* 1811-1891, *métis* despite his name; son of Edward Harrison of North-West Company and a Cree mother.

<sup>1</sup> An Irish rough, who had come to Red River in 1868.

had 27, but as Riel seemed determined to have Beauchemin both Grant and McKay left in disgust. The New Nation is to have full reports of the doings in the convention—that newspaper is still being returned in numbers to the Editor and many of the returned papers have some pretty hard writings on them such as “The New Damnation”—&c. &c. Some letters were despatched to-day for the Stone Fort from Fort Garry, when Riel sent a guard after them & captured them giving them back however unopened to the authorities in Fort Garry. The French are very much displeased at the election of Mr. Scott and rejection of Mr. Bannatyne.

The following is the communication received by Mr. Bannatyne from the Secretary, Coldwell.

Upper Fort Garry  
Jany. 26th 1870

A. G. B. Bannatyne, Esq.,

Sir, As one of the Secretaries of the English and French Convention now in session at Upper Fort Garry I am instructed to inform you that the contested election case for the Town of Winnipeg was this day decided against you and in favor of Mr. Scott by the English delegates. Their decision was embodied in the following resolution which was carried unanimously to wit—Moved by Mr. James Ross Seconded by Mr. Thos. Bunn and resolved—That inasmuch as it appears that the only candidate chosen at a public meeting of the Town of Winnipeg was Mr. Scott and inasmuch as the objections urged by Mr. Bannatyne are such as if established would necessitate a new election—and Mr. Bannatyne himself asserts that he will not be a party to any new election—therefore we the delegates decide that Mr. Scott be accepted as the representative from the “Town of Winnipeg”.

Respectfully Yours

[Signed] WM. COLDWELL

The following is the letter of His Lordship the Bishop of Rupert's Land on the subject which holds that the votes on either side should be examined by the delegates of the convention or by the committee appointed by the people at Fort Garry to determine the mode of election. This course would have been somewhat more just to the responsible men of the Town than the overthrowing them altogether in the matter as has been done by the resolution of the Convention. The resolution is wrong since the objection[s] raised are not Mr. Bannatyne's but [those of] 37 people of the town.



Winnipeg Jany. 25th 1870

Dear Mr. Bannatyne,

In claiming the seat for Winnipeg it would be well to demand that it be settled by the English representatives or by the committee appo'd to determine the mode of election. That Committee could meet and examine the votes tendered for the candidates in a disputed election, hold scrutiny and reject or receive any votes as may seem to them just.

I am very sincerely Yours

R. RUPERT'S LAND

Beauchemin has gone back to his Parish for a new election.

The mail bag came in to-day empty the mail not having got through to Pembina. The Commission of Mr. Smith and the paper in regard to the tariff from the Canadian Government were read and it was discussed whether Mr. Smith should not be called into the convention—but that gentleman preferred that the delegates should prepare their propositions to him before he appeared amongst them—for this reason the following committee of six were appointed to prepare a bill of rights and for that purpose to meet as a Committee to-morrow morning—the Convention in the meantime to be postponed till one O'Clock to-morrow.

## Committee

Louis Riel.	}	French side.
Louis Schmidt.		
Charles Nolin.		
James Ross.	}	English side.
Dr. Bird.		
Thos. Bunn.		

The French desired that the committee should consist only of natives of the country which was agreed to by the English & therefore only natives are on the above committee. James Ross very inconsiderately got up and demanded the production of the Proclamation from the Governor General of Canada based on messages from the Queen and which Mr. Smith stated at the Mass meeting the other day was in the Settlement but its whereabouts was unknown to him.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Ross was out of place in his demand and was unsupported by both English & French sides and the question was dropped for the meantime.

<sup>1</sup> Five hundred copies had been furnished to Thibault and to de Salaberry, but were never made public. Their production would have put a stop to the Provisional Government and made Riel's acts rebellious beyond question.

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The following Letter was received to-day by the postmaster—showing the effect of the late storms in Dakota & Minnesota and the difficulties of bringing the mails through to the Settlement in the winter.

Fort Abercrombie, Jany. 20 '70

Dear Chas—

No thro' mail last night Storm on Sunday stopped the cars. I send the way mail.

My carrier could not travel on Sunday or Sunday night. He was very badly frozen face nose hands and feet.

I wrote you last mail that it was impossible to get through. So I wish to be reported. One man frozen to death on Monday within five miles of this Post & 3 miles from a house. The man that was with the one that froze to death got in just alive. Will loose some of his limbs. It was a fearful storm & I am glad [indecipherable] my carrier is no worse than he is.

There are men from the Post out with teams that all think are lost. Parties are out looking for them &c. &c. &c.

Yours truly,

[Signed] W. C. NASH.<sup>1</sup>

Messrs. Bannatyne & Begg received a letter from E. Stutsman in which he says that he has heard a report that he (E.S.) and Riel have received \$42,000 to lubricate the wheels of the great Rebellion!!!—from U.S. sources—and that he (E.S.) is to be treated with a coat of “Tar and feathers” when he next visits the Settlement (He E.S. need not be afraid). He (E.S.) asks the price of Tar and feathers—and says that if he gets the dose there may be a few thousand of his countrymen wanting the same. It is a pity if there are a few thousand like him in the U.S.

*Friday, 28th January, 1870*

Weather not quite so cold.

The delegates did not meet in convention till one O'Clock P.M. and found then that the Committee on the Bill of Rights had not concluded their labours it was therefore resolved to adjourn till to-morrow morning. Sundry rumors are afloat about the Committee being unable to agree and that Riel is asking the next thing to impossibilities but these reports must be received with caution.

Baptiste Beauchemin was returned to-day from the Parish of St. Charles. The English delegates are well pleased with the conduct of Riel so far in

<sup>1</sup>The Nash who was in Hatch's Independent Battalion of Cavalry at Pembina, 1863-1864?

the convention and there are great hopes of a settlement of our difficulties. The brother of J. H. McTavish<sup>1</sup> from Norway House visited Winnipeg. Governor MacTavish had ordered him to come no further than the Stone Fort as well as Mr. Stewart<sup>2</sup>—but J. H. McT. induced him to come as far as Fort Garry to see some old friends.

*Saturday, 29th January, 1870*

Weather very mild and pleasant.

A Mr. Gay<sup>3</sup> arrived in the settlement who bore a letter of introduction to Major Robinson Editor "New Nation" from Jos. Rolette Senr.—he hails direct from Paris so he says and makes himself out to be a correspondent of a French paper. He was taken prisoner at Fort Garry to-day for some time but afterwards released and is now staying at George Emerlings. No one seems to know what he really is. It is said he advised the French to take the Stone Fort—but as he was known to be tight one part of the day he may have been under the influence of liquor when he gave the advice. The French told him if he wanted to take the Fort very badly to go and take it himself.

The "New Nation" came out again to-day but greatly changed in tone. Annexation to the States is not spoken of at all. Americans are beginning to find that they have been too hasty in their endeavours to bring in Annexation.

The Convention of Delegates met about ten or eleven O'Clock this morning and continued sitting till a late hour in the evening. The Bill of rights prepared by the Committee for that purpose was presented. And the several clauses in the said bill were commenced to be gone into one by one and the following four were adopted by the Convention—

1st. That in view of the present exceptional position of the North West, duties upon goods imported into the country shall continue as at present (except in the case of spirituous liquors) for three years and for such further time as may elapse until there be uninterrupted Railway communication between Red River Settlement and St. Paul and also steam communication between Red River Settlement and Lake Superior.

2nd. That as long as this country remains a Territory in the Dominion of

<sup>1</sup> Not identified.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

<sup>3</sup> Captain N. Gay, of Nice; French soldier of fortune; follower of Garibaldi; later colonel in the army of the Third Republic. See Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.



Canada there shall be no direct taxation except such as shall be imposed by the Local Legislature for municipal or other purposes.

3rd. That during the time this country shall remain in the position of a Territory in the Dominion of Canada all military civil and other expenses in connection with the General Government of the country or that have hitherto been borne by the public funds of the Settlement beyond the receipt of the above mentioned duties shall be met by the Dominion of Canada.

4th. That while the burden of public expences in this Territory is borne by Canada the country be governed under a Lieut. Governor from Canada and a Legislature three members of whom—being heads of departments of the Government—shall be nominated by the Governor General of Canada.

The mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 30th January, 1870*

Weather mild pleasant and agreeable.

The usual services took place to-day.

The Delegates all home to their houses except those who live at a great distance. Archdeacon McLean delivered a sermon to young men and women at Holy Trinity which was rather plain spoken for a public discourse.

A collection was taken up in the Episcopal church to-day in aid of the Missionary [sic] Society in favor of the Indians.

*Monday, 31st January, 1870*

The weather still mild and pleasant.

A very large mail arrived to-day.

The convention of delegates sat again to-day commencing at about one O'Clock P.M. The following resolutions were then passed in addition to the four on Saturday.

5th. That after the expiration of this exceptional period, the country shall be governed as regards its local affairs as the Provinces of Ontario and Quebec are now governed by a legislature elected by the people and a ministry responsible to it under a Lieut. Governor appointed by the Governor General of Canada.

6th. That there shall be no interference by the Dominion Parliament in the local affairs of this Territory other than is allowed in the Provinces and that this Territory shall have and enjoy in all respects the same privileges advantages and aids in meeting the public expenses of this Territory as the Provinces have and enjoy.

7th. That while the North West remains a Territory the Legislature have a

right to pass all laws local to the Territory over the veto of the Lieut. Governor by a two thirds vote.

8th. A Homestead and Pre-emption law.

9th. That while the North West remains a Territory the sum of \$25,000 yearly be appropriated for school[s] roads and bridges.

10th. That all public buildings be at the cost of the Dom. Treasury.

11th. That there shall be guaranteed uninterrupted steam communication to Lake Superior within 5 years and also the establishment by rail of a connection with the American Railway as soon as it reaches the International line.

During the discussion of the last clause A. Scott being desirous to decrease the time allowed for communication to Pembina gave some very impracticable reasons for his argument. It was asked what was the use for a Railway to Pembina before it could connect with another line further east. Mr. Cummings said the only use would be to bring Stutsman to Fort Garry—James Ross spoke a little too much to-day and had to be stopped—he had drunk a little too much.

*Tuesday, 1st February, 1870*

The weather was cold and blustering.

The Convention sat again this morning about ten O'Clock and the following is the result of their deliberations.

12th. That the military force required in this country be composed of natives of the country during 4 years.

Struck out of the List by 23 to 16

13th. That the English and French languages be common in the Legislature and Courts and that all public documents and acts of the Legislature be published in both languages.

14th. That the Judge of the Supreme Court speak the French and English languages.

15th. That treaties be concluded between the Dominion and the several Indian tribes of the Country as soon as possible.

16th. That until the population of this country entitles us to more, we have in the Dominion Parliament one representative in the Upper House and three in the Lower.

17th. That all properties rights and privileges as hitherto enjoyed by us be respected and that the recognition and arrangement of local customs usages and privileges be made under control of the Local Legislature.

18th. That the 2 miles hay privilege be converted into fee simple ownership—  
left over for consideration to-morrow.

## 294 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

The mail went out to-day as usual.

Clause No. 4 is to be taken up again for discussion there being some additions to be put to it.

A letter was sent by today's mail addressed to Bishop Taché at Montreal which looks as if His Lordship intended being in that city shortly and we may therefore look for his arrival in Red River before May.

*Wednesday, 2nd February, 1870*

Weather sharp and frosty but not unpleasant.

The Convention met again to-day at about ten O'Clock and spent the whole day in discussing the 18th clause. The following amendment to that resolution was finally carried by 21 to 18—Mr. McKenzie from the Portage not voting at all and Alfred Scott voting against the English side in favor of the Amendment. The following is the Amendment which now constitutes the 18th clause in the Bill of Rights.

“That the Local Legislature of this Territory have full control of all the public lands inside a circumference having Upper Fort Garry as a centre and that the radii of this circumference be the number of miles that the American line is distant from Fort Garry.”

The refreshment room adjoining the council chamber where the Convention is sitting consists of the open air and the bar—the snow banks in which innumerable bottles containing “Strong Waters” are concealed and from which the members regale themselves every now and again. There are rumors afloat that if Riel is obstinate in having matters settled at this convention—that a strong party will rise up and oblige him to relinquish the position he has taken as President. They even speak of taking him prisoner and confining him in the Stone Fort. Nothing however is to be done until the present Convention is at an end and everything depends on the conduct of Riel after that.

The keeping the prisoners so long is getting up a strong feeling against Riel and especially Halletts being chained.

*Thursday, 3rd February, 1870*

To-day was one of the stormiest days experienced in Red River this winter.

The mail came in early to-day.

The Convention sat again to-day—but consumed the whole forenoon



doing nothing. In the afternoon they finished the Bill of Rights as follows.

19th. That every man in the country, except uncivilized and unsettled Indians, who have attained the age of 21 years and every British subject, a stranger to this Territory who has resided three years in this country and is a householder, shall have a right to vote at the election of a member to serve in the Legislature of the country and in the Dominion Parliament and every foreign subject other than a British subject who has resided the same length of time in this country and is a householder shall have the same right to vote on condition of his taking the oath of allegiance it being understood that this article be subject to amendment exclusively by the Local Legislature.

20th. That the North West Territory shall never be held liable for any portion of the £300,000 paid to the Hudson Bay Company—or for any portion of the public debt of Canada as it stands at the time of our entering the confederation and if thereafter called upon to assume our share of said public debt we consent only on condition that we first be allowed the amount for which we shall be held liable.

It was moved that Mr. Smith be called into the convention in the morning but Mr. Riel rose and said there was a bill [received?] by the Committee providing for our entering the Dominion as a Province and that it would be better for the convention to first discuss the merits of that Bill & then invite Mr. Smith—this was agreed to.

*Friday, 4th February, 1870*

Weather clear and pleasant.

The convention sat to-day and discussed whether we should annex ourselves to Canada as a Territory or a Province. It was decided in favor of the former. Towards the end of the meeting a motion was put to invite Mr. D. A. Smith to attend the convention to-morrow but Mr. Riel arose and said he had another proposition to put before the delegates which he wished to have them agree upon before Mr. Smith was invited in—namely That all the negotiations that passed between the Imperial Government & the Hudson Bay Coy should be null and void—and that the said negotiations should be between the Canadian Parliament and the people of this country. The English delegates left the council very much dissatisfied with this proposition and fully expected trouble in the morning. Mr. A. Scott member for Winnipeg was heard to declare that he would vote even against his own convictions to oppose the English

delegates—and that he had no interest which way things went as regards Red River for he was determined to leave it in a few weeks.

Col. De Salaberry has not left yet and intends remaining till next week to see if he can be the bearer of good news to Canada.

A letter was received to-day by Mr. Bannatyne from Mr. Lilly at Fort Alexander saying that Dr. Bown is hovering around Eagles Nest. That the party in charge of the post there not being aware how matters stood left Bown in charge during his (the officers) temporary absence but that he soon displaced him when he knew the truth. Mr. McVicar<sup>1</sup> one of the escaped prisoners is in the neighbourhood of or at Fort Alexander. Mr. McKenney is said to be removing his goods to Pembina in view of the transfer of this country to Canada—he being it is said afraid to face the music from some old creditors in Canada.

*Saturday, 5th February, 1870*

Weather rather warm for the season and very pleasant.

The Convention sat this morning and had a stormy discussion regarding the nullifying of the negotiations between the Imperial Government & Hudson Bay Coy. The motion was lost however all the English delegates except Scott voting against it as well as Chas. Nolin, Thos. Harrison & Geo. Klyne on the French side. Mr. Riel got very excited when the vote was cast against him & accused Nolin Harrison & Klyne as traitors to their country. Nolin resented this and words very nearly came to worse. Riel said the convention had beaten him this time but he would beat them yet. He said that he had already put the motion before Mr. Smith in a worse form than he had to the convention & intimated that he would do so again despite the action of the delegates. Mr. Hargrave<sup>2</sup> is responsible for the story that this afternoon Riel who seemed to be under the influence of liquor threatened the life of Gov. MacTavish. It is however likely that Riel has been excited over the loss of his last motion and has given way to expressions that he otherwise would not have done. If he attempts any violence towards the Governor the consequences may be very bad.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> George D. McVicar. See note 3 on p. 217.

<sup>2</sup> J. J. Hargrave.

<sup>3</sup> The first evidence in the *Journal*, with the disputed motion, of Riel's antagonism to the Company caused by Smith's efforts to undermine him, and his determination to force the recognition of the Provisional Government by demonstrating the powerlessness of the Company. See Introduction, pp. 97–98.

Jos. Monkman<sup>1</sup> an English Half Breed bearing a commission from Gov. McDougall was on his way into the interior to treat with the Indians. On presenting an order from Mr. McDougall to all company officers to provide him with provisions &c. in his mission he was told that he would have to get an order from Gov. MacTavish before he would be able to get what he wanted—he therefore had to return to the settlement to make other arrangements. It is thought Monkman has been acting on an old order—Monkman has been a great friend of Dr. Schultz hence this commission no doubt.

*Sunday, 6th February, 1870*

Weather—the warmest day experienced this winter.

The new flag of the Provisional Government is hoisted to-day much larger than the first one.

Mr. Chas. Mair is living with his wife at Portage La Prairie in the house of Rev. Hy. George.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Schultz's whereabouts is not yet known—great complaints are being made by his father-in-law that the French are stealing the goods by degrees from his (the Dr.'s) stores.

Walter F. Hyman (Dr. O'Donnell says) will not lose his toes from their having been frozen when he attempted to escape.

Dr. O'Donnell in company with some French Half Breeds called on Oscar Malmoras the American Consul and desired him to interpret to them that the prisoners wished that there should be no rising amongst the settlers to rescue them as they especially did not desire it believing that in a few days they would be tried by Riel and no doubt released.

Mr. Gay is said to have sent off a parcel of letters by a private messenger addressed to Provencher at Pembina—this looks strange & interesting and appears very much as if Gay was a government detective or spy or something like—"we will see what we will see"!!

A guard was placed over Gov. MacTavish, and Dr. Cowan was taken prisoner & confined in the same room with Mr. Hallett. Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne when coming from spending the evening with Col. De Salaberry last night mounted the walls of the Fort—having declared (it is said) that he would get inside some way or another. Riel had

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Monkman, of St. Peter's; given commission by McDougall to win the Indians of the Lake of the Woods region to Canada; P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, McDougall to Macdonald, March 26, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend Henry George, 1832-1881, English Clergyman; incumbent of St. Mary's, Portage la Prairie, 1865-1881.



previously told Mr. Bannatyne to leave the fort that evening and not to return. One of the Turner boys<sup>1</sup> on guard saw Mr. Bannatyne on the wall and threw a stick at him. Mr. B. then jumped from the wall outside and in doing so lost his revolver and snuff box—and seeing a cariole passing got into it and found Hy. Coutu driving. As they were going through the town two men appeared as if on the watch—and Mr. Bannatyne seeing them drove on to Coutu's house which he entered and found Riel there.

Some words it seems passed between Mr. Bannatyne & Riel and the latter told the former not to go near the fort else he would be taken prisoner. This morning Hy. McDermott called on Mr. Bannatyne at his house and asked him to go to the fort to see if Mrs. MacTavish would like to leave and go to her father's.<sup>2</sup> They were not allowed to see the Governor only Mrs. MacTavish and soon left the Fort on their return home—they had not proceeded far however before the guard followed them and took them back prisoners. Mr. Riel who had been called from the church met them and asked them how they dared to go and see the Governor—they replied that they had not seen the Governor. Mr. Riel however retained Mr. Bannatyne as a prisoner and released Hy. McDermott. Mrs. Bannatyne tried to see him but could not—not being allowed by Riel.

It having been rumored that Riel intended taking Chas. Nolin a prisoner the brothers kept a watch over him and Duncan Nolin on meeting two of Riel's men[,] the advance [guard] of a body of twelve[,] put his revolver to one of the men's head but the pistol snapped and would not go off fortunately. It is said Riel went only part of the way with the guard to take Nolin and returned to the church at St. Boniface.

*Monday, 7th February, 1870*

Weather still mild & pleasant.

Mr. Bannatyne still a prisoner.

The Sisters told Mrs. Bannatyne that they would go themselves and get him released either this afternoon or to-morrow.

It having been found that Hy. Coutu and Parisian were spying about for news and it not being known how far they were responsible for Mr.

<sup>1</sup> Presumably sons of George R. Turner, Irish Catholic pensioner, and Anne O'Brien, of whom John Turner was one. An Edmund Turner was one of Thomas Scott's guards and witness at his trial.

<sup>2</sup> Andrew McDermot's.

Bannatyne's imprisonment through false reports, Mr. Alex. Begg in excitement turned them out of Bannatyne & Begg's store.

*A. was a  
"terror" when  
he got "excited"*  
! <sup>1</sup>

The mail came along but the mail man was not allowed to bring it in to the Post Office in the usual way because Baptiste Morrin and Amabe Neau<sup>2</sup> were guarding it in the sled outside. Baptiste Morrin ordered Mr. Begg to open the front door of the store which he Mr. B. said he could not do if he wished as he had not the key. Baptiste then demonstrated that the bags could not be given up—Whereupon Mr. Begg went up to take the bags out of the sled when Baptiste grappled him[,] Neau standing near. Myles McDermott who happened to be in the store now came up and and [sic] on Mr. Begg asking him he took the bags and all walked into the store. Mr. Begg would not open the bags fearing something was wrong under the circumstances until he received orders from Mr. Bannatyne. It appears they wished to detain the mail at the Fort on its way to the Post Office but the mail boy insisted on coming on—hence the guard sent along with him.

English delegates were in doubts as to going to the Convention but finally after meeting at Dr. Bird's they concluded to go. Mr. Smith met the convention and stated that he was empowered to grant some of the clauses in the Bill of Rights but others he could not, but it was his opinion that all would be conceded [sic] by the Canadian Parliament.

Mr. Smith stated that his powers exceeded those of Messrs. De Salaberry & Grand Vicaire Thibault—as more was known of the troubles here in Canada when he left Ottawa after them.<sup>3</sup> It was proposed to send delegates from this country to Canada and Col. De Salaberry on the part of the Canadian Government promised that the expenses of these delegates would be paid from and back to this country by Canada. The delegates are to meet to-morrow to arrange about forming a Provisional Government in the meantime and also about the delegates.

Mrs. Bannatyne was again refused access to her husband—and he was not released this evening.

Men are moving about the town at night evidently on the alert to find out what is going on.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in another hand.

<sup>2</sup> André Nault, 1830–1924, Canadian of Red River, behind whose lands the survey was stopped; associate of Riel in raising barricade at St. Norbert.

<sup>3</sup> *New Nation*, February 11, 1870. Begg's brief summary is substantially accurate; the Commissioner, of course, had to express many cautious qualifications.

## 300 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

A Meeting of the MacTavish Fire Engine Coy No. 1. was called for this evening.

*Indian name*<sup>1</sup> It is said that after the convention Riel visited the house of Augustin (Mcuzme) Nolin<sup>2</sup> and while at supper a man passed the window & entered the house—when Riel threw down his knife & fork and said he was choking—that he was just going to be killed—and asked who the man was who came into the house. Nolin assured him that he never would be killed in his house & went with his gun to speak to the man in the passage. The man said he was merely wishing to know the way to *an Indian*<sup>3</sup> Boxer's tent. Nolin showed him the path & he left—a few moments afterwards about 40 of Riel's men appeared & demanded Riel and took him back to the fort—and Riel afterwards sent and had the man in Boxer's tent arrested, when he was found to be a man from Pembina on private business.

*Tuesday, 8th February, 1870*

Weather still mild and pleasant.

The convention sat again to-day and the morning was consumed in discussion and resulted in the following resolution.

Moved by Mr. James Ross seconded by Mr. Riel and resolved unanimously—That as the Canadian Commissioners have invited a delegation from this country to Canada, to confer with the Canadian Government as to the affairs of this country and as a cordial reception has been promised to said delegates—be it therefore resolved that the invitation be accepted and that the same be signified to the Commissioners.<sup>4</sup>

The rest of the day was consumed in discussing the Provisional Government. Riel insisted on their recognising the one already formed—nothing definitely was done and the convention adjourned to sit again to-morrow.

The mail went out as usual.

It is reported that the Americans are working out a revenge on Mr. Bannatyne and are at the bottom of his imprisonment. The Sisters pleaded hard for Mr. Bannatyne's release but could not obtain it.

It is reported that Mr. Bannatyne is kept in the Mess room at Fort Garry and is very comfortable.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note.

<sup>2</sup> Augustin Nolin ; see note 2 on p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note.

<sup>4</sup> *New Nation*, February 18, 1870 (*The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 268).



Wednesday, 9th February, 1870

Weather still very mild.

The convention sat again to-day and had some considerable discussion during which Mr. Riel declared and it must be said proved that the Hudson Bay Coy. Government was if not dead completely powerless. He turned to Judge Black & asked him why the notices for the February court was [sic] not posted—and to Dr. Bird the coroner why in the case of the late murder of Johnson he did not appeal to the H.B.C. Government for the arrest of the murderer—indeed he said there was a letter in the room defying the H.B.C. in the case of the Johnson murder.

A delegation consisting of John Sutherland and Fraser were [sic] sent to Gov. MacTavish to speak to him respecting the forming of a Provisional Government. He (Gov. MacT.) answered for God's sake to have any form of Government which would restore peace and order. Fraser asked him if he would delegate his authority to another. The Governor's reply was—" *I am dying and will not delegate my authority to anyone*". Convention meets to-morrow to arrange about the Council which is to be formed and it is understood that said council is to elect its head.<sup>1</sup>

The Nolins stated that they had told Riel that he would have to release Mr. Bannatyne Dr. Cowan & Gov. MacTavish before they would join him & that Riel promised that they would soon be released.

It is reported that Col. De Salaberry & Grand Vicaire Thibault are not very friendly in their feelings for Mr. Smith—it is said they are jealous of his powers—and are not working in concert with them. It is the opinion of the writer of this journal that that wily politician Sir Geo. E. Cartier has been at the bottom of a great deal of our trouble to secure this country to Canada on terms that will put it outside the pale to a great extent of Upper Canada.

Wm. Drever Jnr. & a Mr. Brunell<sup>2</sup> were taken prisoners to-day. Wm. D[rever] was confined in the same room with Wm. Hallett & Dr. Cowan.

It was reported that Dr. Cowan was at liberty inside the Fort but this was afterwards contradicted.

<sup>1</sup> The report of this interview appears in the *New Nation*, February 18. Begg's version is in full agreement. Another version, substantially the same, is given by Xavier Pagée in the *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine* (Winnipeg, 1874), p. 74, though Pagée is not named by either Begg or the *New Nation* as being present at the interview.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

## 302 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

Major Robinson told Dan Develin that the Americans had been the cause of Mr. Bannatyne's imprisonment & that [Alfred H.] Scott had done all the harm he could to Mr. Bannatyne both down the Settlement and up the Assiniboine during previous election meetings.

It was reported that a guard was to be placed over Bannatyne & Begg's store and that Mr. Begg was to be arrested but these rumors are not believed.

Mr. Farquharson Dr. Schultz's father-in-law was taken prisoner to-day. Spies are about the whole time—watching.

*Thursday, 10th February, 1870*

Weather mild but stormy towards night.

Convention sat this morning and a committee of the following members

James Ross	}	English	Louis Riel	}	French
Thos. Bunn			Wm. O'Donohue		
Dr. Bird			Chas. Nolin		

[was elected] to construct an outline of the proposed Provisional Government. Mr. James Ross before the committee was formed made an able speech in favor of forming a Provisional Government. It was not till late in the evening that the committee got through their labours—which they then presented to the Convention. When the delegates were pretty [nearly] through Mr. Geo. Gunn who happened to be absent came in and insisted on hearing the resolutions already passed read over to him—to some of which he raised objections. There came nearly being a stormy scene at this time—the guards who were in the court house mustered round the door—as well as some of the French councillors. Things quieted down however and the following was the result of the committee's labours without details.

That the Council shall consist of 24 members 12 English 12 French. Each side shall decide the way of appointment—the English it appears being desirous of a reelection, the French keeping on their regular councillors of the Provisional Government.

That the President of Council shall not be one of the 24 members.

James Ross	appointed	Judge.
H. McKenney	„	Sheriff.
Dr. Bird	„	Coroner.
A. G. B. Bannatyne	„	Postmaster.
John Sutherland	}	„ Collectors of Customs.
Rodger Goulait		

Thos. Bunn appointed Secretary.

Louis Schmidt „ Sub. Secretary.

Wm. O'Donohue „ Treasurer.

Louis Riel, President of the Council.

All Justices retain places except Wm. Dease who is supplanted by Norbert Larance. A  $\frac{2}{3}$  vote overrules the veto of the President.

The General Quarterly Court to be held same as before.

Five Petty Courts to be held as below

Lower Court Parish of St. Andrews.

Middle „ Court House, Fort Garry.

Upper „ White Horse Plains.

Oak Point Court.

St. Anns „ 1

Riel had promised the Convention in view of the English joining in a Provisional Government to release Gov. MacTavish, Dr. Cowan, & A. G. B. Bannatyne at once and the balance of the prisoners in a day or two. Consequently when the Convention had ended their labours—the three first named political prisoners were released. At the same time a salute was fired from Fort Garry by the French from the large guns and small arms. Enthusiasm reigned everywhere. In the town of Winnipeg brilliant fireworks were set off and bonfires lighted—guns fired and cheering and drinking universal. A regular drunk commenced in which everyone seemed to join—as [a] party of those “who were in for fun” visited Fort Garry and brought Mr. O'Donohue & J. H. McTavish back with them to the town where the affaire was kept up till about four O'Clock in the morning. Riel did not appear in the festivities but took a good horn of brandy with Mr. Bannatyne when he released him. The fireworks that were let off belonged to Dr. Schultz and strange to say were brought by that gentleman to the settlement to commemorate [sic] the establishment of McDougall's government—how things change—they were fired off to commemorate [sic] the Provisional Government of the R. R. people.<sup>2</sup> A small mail came in to-day.

A report came in that from 50 to 200 men were on the way from the Portage to attack Fort Garry and release the prisoners. Lonsdale sent word to stop them till the convention had finished its labours.

<sup>1</sup> *New Nation*, February 18, 1870. The items of the two reports are in different order, but agree in details. In *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 270–271, Begg follows the *New Nation's* report.

<sup>2</sup> For this picturesque detail Begg substitutes the account of the *New Nation*, *Supplement*, February 11, 1870, in *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 272–273.



*Friday, 11th February, 1870*

To-day has been the stormiest day that has been experienced in Red River for many years—at one time it was impossible to see across the street in the town of Winnipeg from the drifting snow. The convention sat to-day for the last time it is supposed and spent the morning in a good deal of useless discussion—in apportioning the settlement for the election of delegates it was decided that the Town of Winnipeg should be included in the parish of St. Johns—much to the disgust of Mr. A. Scott. In the course of the morning Riel stated to the convention that to show the responsibilities the late Provisional Government had taken upon it, he thought it proper to state that Dr. Schultz was an exile from the country and that anybody finding him was at liberty to shoot him, that his property was confiscated and would be sold to pay his debts—first his back duties—then debts due in this country and the balance to liquidate his liabilities elsewhere.

Riel stated that the new Provisional Government formed was free of liability in the matter of Dr. Schultz or any other acts committed by the late Provisional Government.

The prisoners were expected to be released to-day on giving their parol[e] that they would not break the peace—except four unmarried men who are to be sent across the lines—the names of the 4 have not transpired.

Dr. Bown's printing office and fixtures are confiscated also and it is said that a great portion of the type has been already run into bar lead & bullets. The following was the manner in which the settlement was apportioned for election purposes.

St. Peters	1 delegate.
St. Clements	1 „
St. Andrews	2 „
St. Pauls	1 „
Kildonan	1 „
St. Johns & Winnipeg	1 „
St. James	1 „
Headingly	1 „
St. Anns	1 „
St. Margarets	1 „
St. Marys	1 „

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12 delegates.

The following were the delegates appointed for the mission to Canada but they are not to leave here till after the sitting of the new Council.

Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot	-	French.	
Judge Black	-	English.	
Alfred H. Scott	-	„	& American.

The appointment of Mr. Scott gives universal dissatisfaction except amongst a few Americans in the settlement.

The delegates returned to their homes to-night except one or two who remained over the night.

*Saturday, 12th February, 1870*

The weather to-day was clear and bright.

Alfred H. Scott & H. F. O'Lone were going about with a petition to have the Town of Winnipeg seperated [sic] from St. John's Parish—this is done to endeavour and get another American candidate for councillor—it is said the petition had 41 names on it when it was presented at the Fort—but who signed it is not known nor what power Riel can have to change the decision of the English delegates at the convention.

Wm. Hallett and Chas. Garrett were released to-day—some delay was occasioned in the release of any of the other prisoners by the report of the body of men on the way from Portage La Prairie. Mr. Lonsdale came down from Headingly and reported that about 105 men were there and that their determination was to rescue the prisoners if they were not released by Riel.

The following prisoners were released on their parol[e] that they should keep the peace and abide by the laws of the country:

Wm. Hallett—had to give security amounting to £450 to keep the peace.

Chas. Garrett.

Wm. Drever, Jnr.—had to give security amounting to £400 to keep the peace.

Two French Half Breeds (names unknown).

Jas. Mulligan.

Chas. Stodgall.

T. Franklin.

— Murray.

D. W. Campbell.

Jas. Stewart.

A. R. Chisholm.

Dr. O'Donnell.

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— Langman.

H. Wrightman.

A. Wright.

A young man Davis<sup>1</sup> escaped while the above were being liberated. The mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 13th February, 1870*

To-day was rather blustering but not very cold.

It appears that Farquharson is not so careful with his tongue as he ought to be and there are doubts about his early liberation on that account if he is not indeed sent across the lines.

Dr. Lynch it is reported has been put in irons—some say for striking one of his guards. John F. Grant<sup>2</sup> came down to-day from Headingly on a message to Riel to demand the rel[e]ase of the prisoners—Riel stated that they could go on giving their parol[e] which some of them through a misunderstanding refuse to do—it appears they have the opinion that Riel wishes them to fight if necessary for the Provisional Government. The usual services took place to-day.

*Monday, 14th February, 1870*

Weather clear and frosty in the morning but towards noon it became warm and pleasant.

There were six prisoners taken to-day by Riel's party in Wm. Dease's [sic] house amongst whom were Elie Millien—Wm. Gaddee[, ] Sabine—and a son of old Lavantures. Wm. Dease escaped through a window in the end of his house and his whereabouts is not known.<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Cowan's house in Fort Garry is being converted into the Government House and the Dr. and his family have removed to the house of Governor MacTavish.

Chas. Garrett said to-day that he was going to institute a suit against the Hudson Bay Company for his imprisonment & loss thereby and declares that he has proofs of their complicity in the present trouble. Poor deluded man!!

<sup>1</sup> Not identified.

<sup>2</sup> See note 1 on p. 248 above.

<sup>3</sup> William Dease, 1827-1913, son of John Warren Dease, Chief Factor, and Geneviève Beignet. Dease's house was at Pointe Coupée, near the present Ste. Agathe. William Gaddy had come to him from the Portage party, and the arrest was to prevent their co-operating with the men from Portage; Sabine has not been identified. Gaddy was a messenger of the Portage party; he lived at Portage la Prairie, and is said by I. Cowie (*Company of Adventurers*, p. 417) to have been a son of



G. A. Hill supposed to be a prisoner in Fort Garry is living with Brunell at Lake Manitoba.<sup>1</sup>

A good deal of discontent is felt amongst the English speaking people at the non-release of the prisoners according to promise. The band of men from Portage La Prairie are still at Headingly—and a rumor was abroad that Schultz was raising a body of men near the Stone Fort. Henry Prince the Indian chief at the Indian Settlement it is said has declared that if any armed French Half Breed comes down farther than Sugar Point he better look out for his life.

The mail bags came in empty to-day the mail not having reached Pembina—the carrier brought word that six persons were frozen near Fort Abercrombie.

Riel's party have been moving Dr. Schultz' goods all day—his furniture being used by Riel to fit up the government house. Mrs. Schultz begged of O'Donohue to be allowed to keep some of her clothes—which was refused. Messrs. John Sutherland, Wm. Fraser, James Ross & two others from the Scotch went and called on Riel about the prisoners—they were told that 20 more would be released to-night.

*Tuesday, 15th February, 1870*

Weather rather cold but not unpleasant.

The prisoners taken at Wm. De[as]'s house were released last night.<sup>2</sup> There was a rumor to day that between 80 and 100 men from Headingly passed through the town this morning about 4 O'Clock on their way down the settlement in the direction of the Stone Fort—as they passed they surrounded Hy. Coutu's house (where Riel has been in the habit of staying at night) and asked if he was there no doubt for the purpose of taking him prisoner.<sup>3</sup> Riel however was not in the house—and they passed on taking breakfast it is said at the house of the late Wm. Inkster. It is said the party carried ladders with them—and that they were on

Magnus Birston ; see note 1 on p. 286. He was described by Mair as being, with William Hallet, leader of the "English Plains Hunt": Q.U.L., Mair papers, Mair to E. H. Macklin, November 25, 1922.

<sup>1</sup> Hill, like Brunell, cannot be identified.

<sup>2</sup> Except William Gaddy.

<sup>3</sup> Begg reports as rumour that the Portage party searched for Riel at Henri Coutu's house. That he had done so was later to be made part of the justification for the shooting of Scott. Major C. A. Boulton says that on the chance of capturing Riel, the house was surrounded and he and Scott entered. He says nothing to suggest that either he or Scott was moved by personal animosity (C. A. Boulton, *Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellion*, p. 105).

their way to raise the settlement if possible to demand the release of the prisoners. Judge Black confirmed the above having met the body of men on his way to the town.

Word came up that the men of St. Andrews and lower down were rising and intended to have a mass meeting at Mr. A. Boyd's place in that parish—also that great discontent was felt amongst the people down the settlement at the action of their delegates especially Thos. Bunn, Donald Gunn, James Ross ; they say that the former and latter have sold themselves to Riel. The feeling against the latter [Ross] is very strong and it is said that the people of St. Johns sent word to him that he was required by them to not accept or resign his position as Judge—or Chief Justice. Sundry rumors came in during the day regarding the numbers collecting down the settlement but nothing certain could be ascertained. At last Miss McVicar<sup>1</sup> called in the evening on Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne and asked him if he would go with her to Fort Garry and try to obtain the release of the prisoners as there were about 6 or 700 men collected at Kildonan School house and that they were “determined” to attack the Fort and that there would certainly be bloodshed. Mr. Bannatyne at once consented to go and they started for the Fort—when they got there they found Riel in the act of administering the oath to the prisoners. Miss McV. & Mr. B. stated their mission and requested to see the prisoners which was granted—and then they persuaded them as far as they could to sign the paper prepared for them and to take the oath which was merely to keep the peace and the laws of the country. Smith was the first prisoner who was called and when he was asked to sign he asked if the rest would sign.<sup>2</sup> Mr. Bannatyne requested him to sign and told him it was all right. Smith signed. Miller followed—the same thing happened, the next prisoner was similar: then all the balance followed. Dr. Lynch said at once when he saw the paper that he could sign that and immediately did so. Riel would not take Farquharson's oath as he said he had twice already broken his oath—they pushed him out of the Fort. Wm. Drever afterwards drove Miss McVicar down to stop the party from coming up. Maurice Lowman, James Ross and Colin Inkster came down to hear the news and on hearing that the prisoners were out they went on to Fort Garry to demand a general amnesty to all Canadians—this seemed ill timed and the mission was unsuccessful. It seemed that

<sup>1</sup> Miss Victoria McVicar, cousin of Mrs. John Sutherland and of Mrs. Bernard Ross. Miss McVicar was a visitor from Canada in 1869-1870.

<sup>2</sup> Some of the prisoners had pledged themselves to act only as a body.

another danger to the Settlement had been passed. The party carried a flag which is hoisted over the Kildonan School House. John McKenney, Porter<sup>1</sup> and one Parisian<sup>2</sup> are taken prisoners by the English party as spies. One McLean<sup>3</sup> is on the other hand a prisoner with the French on suspicion of being a spy. McVicar<sup>4</sup> (the escaped prisoner) who was with McLean escaped.

The mail did not go out as the carrier was a soldier in the fort.

*Wednesday, 16th February, 1870*

Weather frosty and bright.

Yesterday's mail went out this morning.

Word has been received that Bishop Taché<sup>5</sup> is now in Canada and great hopes are entertained that he will push on to Red River—as it is thought he will do much to prevent bloodshed. The Bishop wrote from Rome to Gov. MacTavish that his heart was broken by the news he had received from Red River—and complained that he has not been properly posted regarding events by his own clergy.<sup>6</sup>

A letter was also sent to Gov. MacTavish by the London Eng. authorities of the H.B.C. telling him at any cost to prevent bloodshed between the settlers.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John McKenney and Porter have not been identified.

<sup>2</sup> Norbert Parisien, 1814–1870, *métis* of St. Norbert, declared by Riel to be a partisan of Schultz.

<sup>3</sup> “Flatboat” John MacLean, so called from his occupation as freighter of goods down the Red.

<sup>4</sup> George D. MacVicar. See note 3 on p. 217 above.

<sup>5</sup> Monseigneur Alexandre-Antoine Taché, O.M.I., 1823–1894, Bishop (later Archbishop) of St. Boniface, 1854–1894. Bishop Taché had left Red River in June, 1869, to visit Canada and attend the Oecumenical Council at Rome. He arrived in Ottawa on February 9.

<sup>6</sup> No such letter has been found in a search of the inward correspondence in the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, kindly made by Miss A. M. Johnson, Archivist.

<sup>7</sup> The following may be the letters referred to: H.B.C., A 6/43, p. 322. W. G. Smith to Mactavish, December 11, 1869. Expresses hope Mactavish will use his personal influence with all parties “to keep matters as quiet and peaceable as the present state of things will admit”; and quotes Donald A. Smith's advice to Cartier not to send a military force to Red River. Also *ibid.*, p. 339, W. G. Smith to Mactavish, December 31, 1869:

“They [the Governor and Committee] sincerely trust that their object may be attained without the employment of force and above all without a collision between the different sections of the population in the Settlement, feeling assured that the



It is said a rumor is out that £5 has been offered by Riel as a reward to anyone taking Dr. Schultz dead or alive.

It is reported that the English party at the Scotch Church has 4 cannon one of which is a rifled 18 pounder and plenty of ammunition—grape cannister and it is said shell.<sup>1</sup>

Everyone appeared relieved that peace seemed once more certain—people were congratulating themselves that the country had again escaped when word was brought in by Mr. Wm. Fraser that put a different feature on things. It seems that the English party had taken a prisoner named Parisian<sup>2</sup> who managed afterwards to escape taking with him a gun belonging to his captors—he was immediately pursued and as he ran along the river young John H. Sutherland, son of John Sutherland one of the delegates at the late convention—was coming to see how matters were going on at the church when Parisian met him and thinking that he might stop him or, as some say, wishing to take his horse to aid in escaping—he shot at Sutherland first firing through his hand and another shot through his body. Sutherland fell and was afterwards carried to the house of Rev. John Black. Parisian was soon overtaken in the woods and one of the [Paquins? illegible] from the Portage fired at him—not to hit him but to bring him to. Parisian received some ugly gashes on the head it is said and many amongst the English party wished to lynch him—but good sense triumphed and he was merely taken prisoner.

Wm. Fraser went and saw Riel about the matter—but it appears was not very cordially received—Riel saying that the man Parisian escaping had a right to fire on anyone whom he thought a pursuer. Rev. John Black sent a written message to Riel by one Norquay<sup>3</sup> stating that the English portion of the settlement down the Red River would not recognise his government and spoke about the Sutherland's [son] being shot—and that they had Parisian a prisoner. Riel it is said became very excited and angry and tore up the letter in bits at the same time to kept Norquay a prisoner [sic]—he then told Fraser to go back and tell the English what he had seen. Fraser went back but said that he would not give any message or say anything that would excite the people at the Scotch church. effects of any such collision would be very disastrous to the future prosperity of the country."

<sup>1</sup> The English party had one six-pounder cannon.

<sup>2</sup> Norbert Parisien, of note 2, p. 309. Parisien died on March 4 of the wounds inflicted on him by his captors. *New Nation*, April 8, 1870, says April 6, but this is an error.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Norquay, 1843-1892, of St. Andrew's, brother of Honourable John Norquay, and later member of Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.

Word came in that some little hopes were entertained that young Sutherland would yet live.

The excitement now became great. Shops were shut and such things as books and money were put in places of safety—as it was feared the English party on hearing of Norquay's imprisonment would come up and attack Fort Garry—women and children were sent out of the town in several cases—and all looked forward to a general fight commencing. O'Donohue at the head of about fifty men came and demanded Messrs. Bannatyne & Begg's powder—the key of the powder house not being found Mr. Bannatyne told O'Donohue to lift the roof and that they would then get at the powder—this they accordingly did—and took away about 62 Kegs [of] Gunpowder which they placed in Fort Garry.

Parties of the French also went round taking horses from the stables promising to return them—they took two belonging to Hy. McDermott and several the property of other parties—where they found a stable locked they did not break in.

Scouts were out in every direction from Fort Garry all afternoon and it is said some of them penetrated into the English camp. John McKenney was set at liberty by the English party and sent with Norquay to Fort Garry to explain what he knew. Norquay was liberated by Riel about four in the afternoon.

Judge Black sent in a refusal to accept the position of delegate to Ottawa. It is reported that the French have drawn over two of the large guns from Fort Garry to St. Boniface and that 100 or more men are stationed there to protect the church.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bird was called upon to go and see young Sutherland—he came back and reported that the English would not move to-night and that it was probable they would disperse on some assurance that Riel did not desire to coerce them into his government—but he reported that they were holding a council at Mr. Black's and as it was not over he did not know definitely what they intended to do—he did not think young Sutherland would recover.

They were levying provisions from amongst the Scotch and others in the neighbourhood of Black's church and it was said that if they determined on attacking Fort Garry they would press every man they could find into their service.

Thus matters stood in one way looking brighter and yet very uncertain—every preparation was made in Fort Garry to receive an attack.

<sup>1</sup> It was thought that the English would attack from east of the Red ; see Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below.

Many of the Americans in town were contemplating going to Fort Garry for protection in case of an attack by the English.

Dr. Schultz is reported to be amongst the party at the Scotch church but only as a follower and not in command. Prince's Indians are also there and have torches prepared to set fire to Fort Garry—bringing Indians into the affair is wrong.

Riel it is said sent a letter to the English that if they desired they were at liberty to form a Provisional Government or something to that effect—but to keep away from Fort Garry—for if they came near there it meant fight, and fight it would be.<sup>1</sup> Maurice Lowman came up in the evening to the town and reported that the English party had decided upon dispersing and all going to their homes—that they intended guarding the Stone Fort—with Prince's Indians—the Portage people were also going home in the morning—that Parisian was to be taken to the Stone Fort and kept there until better times.

This relieved the anxiety of many and everything remained quiet—during the night a large guard was kept in the town however it is said on the lookout for the Portage people passing through the town—they did not come however.

The French took guns from Mr. McDermotts and powder and ammunition from W. H. Lyons.

*Thursday, 17th February, 1870*

Weather bright and frosty.

A report is abroad this morning that Wm. Gaddee an English Half

<sup>1</sup> Begg's version of Riel's reply reads very like Schmidt's recollection ; see *Memoirs*, and that reported by Taché to Howe : *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 22, Taché to Howe, March 11, 1870. But the photostat of his letter (in English) in P.A.M., Riel Papers, is as follows :

Ft. Garry, 16 Feby. 70.

“ Fellow-Countrymen Mr. Norquay came this morning with a message and even [though] he has been delayed he will reach you [in] time enough to tell you that for my part I understand that war, horrible civil war, is the destruction of this country, and Schultz will laugh at us if after all he escapes. We are ready to meet any party. But peace, our British rights we want before all. Gentlemen, the prisoners are out, they have all sworn to keep peace. We have taken the responsibility of our past acts. Mr. William McTavish has asked you for the sake of God to form and complete the Provisional Government. Your representatives have joined us on that ground. Who will now come and destroy the Red River Settlement [?] I am your humble poor, fair & confident public servant, L. Riel.”

The conclusion of the writer is that the message quoted by Begg *et al.* was oral and first ; the letter quoted above, unknown to Begg, was sent later in the day.



Breed prisoner in Fort Garry was privately executed last night for complicity in a conspiracy to attack and murder everyone in the Fort. It appears he had—or there were intercepted in some way—letters to show that a plan was formed to attack the Fort from three different directions—Wm. Dease from up the Red River another party from Portage quarter and another from down the settlement. The worst feature of the whole is that the Sioux Indians were to participate in it and the plan was for these wretches to attack the houses of the French settlers murdering women & children and burning the houses—if this latter is true it is simply horrible—there is no doubt apparently that Wm. Gaddee is dead but no one seems to know the manner of his death.<sup>1</sup>

Reports came in that the English party had actually disbanded and many of them returned to their homes.

Soon after a body of men some walking & others in carioles were seen cutting across from the direction of the Scotch church some distance from the town to connect with the road up the Assiniboine. These were seen from the Fort and immediately a party on horseback started in pursuit—there were a few on foot behind the horsemen. The two bands (French & Portage people for it turned out to be the latter starting on their way home from the Scotch church) were going in directions that would cause them to meet about a mile and a half from the town out on the prairie. The excitement was intense while the two bodies neared each other—everyone expected to see a fight. Slowly the two parties came together but no shots were fired. The French demanded that the Canadians should lay down their arms and deliver themselves up. This the Portage people agreed to and then there were shaking of hands and the two bodies of men mixed up and all together proceeded in the direction of Fort Garry. It is said some of the Canadians refused for some time to give up their arms—not indeed until quite near the fort. One of the Portage party hid himself in the bushes (an elderly man it is said) but on examining the prisoners found many of their pistol hol[s]ters empty of the weapons [sic]. A couple of men went out to find them thinking that they had been thrown away before the party was captured—during the search the two men came across the hidden man and took him prisoner—

<sup>1</sup> There was to be some mystery about Gaddy's reported execution. A. G. Morice, *The Red River Insurrection* (Winnipeg, 1935), pp. 273–274, explains that the execution was feigned, and Gaddy told to keep himself concealed across the line. As he survived, this is probably true.

For the alleged plan of attack, see Riel's *Historical Memoir*, No. xxvii below.

his name has not been ascertained. There were 41 men in the Portage party and about 50 in the French. Wm. O'Donohue and Pierre Delorme were amongst the latter. Capt. Bo[u]lton<sup>1</sup> was in command of the former—the whole party of men were lodged as prisoners in Fort Garry—and Capt. Bo[u]lton put in chains—great fears are entertained that some of the party may suffer death for complicity in the same move that Wm. Gaddee was concerned in.

Wm. Dease has not been taken prisoner yet but the French are on the look out for him.

"Jimmy from Cork" ran off one of Hy. McDermott's horses from the French and returned the animal to the owner. Jimmy professes to be a warm supporter of Riel—he got very tight to-day and had to be walked off to the Fort by the French guard as he became unsafe with his firearms.

Young Sutherland died this morning or last night from the effects of the wounds inflicted on him by Parisian.

Parisian has been taken to the Stone Fort and to-night one of the Prudens came up with a note addressed to Riel—but without signature saying that Parisian would be returned to his home as soon as his wounds were cured. This note being without any signature shows how foolishly things are managed amongst us. Pruden asked Mr. Bannatyne what he thought best to do. Mr. B. told him he did not know as the letter was merely in the shape of a notice without any authority attached he referred Pruden to Mr. H. McKenney as likely to know what ought to be done. It would seem as if Parisian had been wounded severely when he was captured—he is not held as a prisoner.

The mail came in this evening—double the usual size on account of Mondays one not getting through—the papers bring accounts of statements made by Stuart Mulkins<sup>2</sup> false as he must be himself and implicating it would appear everyone in the present troubles—it seems strange that almost all Canadians [sic] who leave this country set afloat wrong impressions about the country and people. Duncan Nolin<sup>3</sup> was

<sup>1</sup> Charles Arkell Boulton, 1842-1899, Captain of 46th Militia Regiment; member of Dennis's survey party; wintered at Portage la Prairie, and led the Portage party in attempt to keep them within bounds; later Senator from Manitoba; author of *Reminiscences of the North-West Rebellion* cited above.

<sup>2</sup> Stewart Mulkins, member of Dennis's survey party and nephew of J. S. Dennis, who had returned to Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Duncan Nolin, circa 1848-?; brother of Charles, Augustin and François.

taken prisoner to-day out of Bannatyne & Begg's store—but for what reason is not known.

A party of about twenty French on horseback passed down the Settlement to-day to recon[n]oitre—they returned by way of the river. What their mission was is only conjectured. Riel must naturally feel exasperated at the English for as it were breaking faith with him. The Provisional government being now as good as dead as far as the English people are concerned. It is to be lamented that prejudices were not put in peoples pockets when the future prosperity of the country is concerned. Riel will not have any more faith in the English and there is now a gulf between the two sides—it will go hard with Bo[u]lton on this account—& Dr. Schultz is believed to be at the bottom of it also.

*Friday, 18th February, 1870*

Weather very cold and clear.

The following are the names of the prisoners taken in Capt. Bo[u]lton's party.

Capt. Bo[u]lton.	James Jock.
John McLean.	x Thos. Scott. x
Rob. McBain.	James Sanderson.
Wilder Bartlett.	George Wylds.
James McBain.	D. Taylor.
Dan. Sissons.	A. Taylor.
A. Murray.	Geo. Newcomb[e] [text torn]
Wm. Farmer.	H. Taylor. <sup>2</sup>
Laurence Smith.	J. B. Morrison.
Chas. McDonald.	W. Salter.
John Switzer.	Magnus Brown.
H. Williams.	N. Morrison.
Alex. McPherson.	W. Sutherland.
W. G. Bird.	Robt. Dennison.
Alex. McLean. <sup>1</sup>	Jos. Smith.
Jos. Paquin.	Chas. Millan.
Geo. Sandison.	Thos. Baxter. <sup>3</sup>
Wm. Paquin.	John Taylor. <sup>4</sup>
J. Dillworth.	John McKay. <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These men, Robert B. Hill states in his *History of Manitoba* (Toronto, 1890), p. 286, were from Portage. Hill does not list James Sanderson, who cannot be identified.

<sup>2</sup> From Poplar Point.

<sup>3</sup> From Headingly.

<sup>4</sup> See note 1 on p. 286.



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Wm. Dillworth.

R. Adams.

J. Paquin.

M. McLeod.

Arch. McDonald.<sup>1</sup>

Alex. Parker.<sup>2</sup>

Sergeant Powers.<sup>3</sup>

John Ivy.<sup>4</sup>

G. Parker.<sup>5</sup>

One unknown.<sup>6</sup>

Duncan Nolin was released to-day.

There are great doubts existing (although nothing is definitely known) about the execution of Wm. Gaddee—it is now reported that he is hid away to prevent some of the French from killing him. Some assert that he has been heard speaking in one of the bastions and that provisions are secretly carried into him.

“Jimmy from Cork” was tight to-day and threatening to shoot Dan Develin. Riel at the request of Mr. Bannatyne sent a guard after him and walked him off to the fort. Fears are entertained some of the prisoners taken yesterday will suffer death.

Col. De Salaberry is talking of going down the settlement to speak to the English. Fort Garry is still crowded with French.

*Saturday, 19th February, 1870*

Weather clear and frosty.

The New Nation came out to-day but the descriptions of late events contained in it were of so flippant a nature that Riel declaring it was a disgrace to the country stopped the issue of the paper saying that he would not allow a single copy to go abroad.<sup>7</sup>

Wm. Dease appeared at the Fort yesterday and took an oath not to go against Riel or his government. It appears that he and the Milliens have promised Riel not to go against him but they would not join him. Reports are abroad that Indians are on the way from the Portage to attack the French settlers' houses.

Capt. Bo[u]lton<sup>8</sup> and three others have been condemned to be shot.

Mr. & Mrs. Sutherland father and mother of the young man who lately

<sup>1</sup> According to Hill (*op. cit.*, p. 287), from High Bluff. <sup>2</sup> From Headingly.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 on p. 186.

<sup>4</sup> Not given in Hill, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> Said by Hill (*op. cit.*) to be from Rivière Sale.

<sup>6</sup> Begg's unknown may be James Joy of St. James.

<sup>7</sup> This was the *New Nation*, February 18, 1870.

<sup>8</sup> Boulton, along with Thomas Scott, John Taylor and George Parker, was condemned unheard by court-martial on February 18. See *Reminiscences*, p. 117; also C.S.P., 1870 (12): Report of Commissioner D. A. Smith, p. 6. These four men, with Charles Mair, M. Power and Murdoch McLeod, were the most active members of the Portage party.

lost his life by Parisian—visited Riel and implored the lives of the condemned men for the sake of the boy they had lost. Riel was very much affected—and said [“] you have saved three lives—but Capt. Bo[u]lton must suffer. Indians have been raised and the homes of our men are threatened.[”]

Archdeacon McLean visited Fort Garry early this morning and sent word back to Mrs. McLean that Bo[u]lton would be shot at twelve to-night and he had promised to remain by him to the end—and that Bo[u]lton was resigned to his fate and would die in the true faith.

Several parties have interceded with Riel amongst others the American Consul—and several ministers. H. F. O’Lone also went to the fort on the same mission.

Mrs. MacTavish the governor’s wife and Mrs. Bannatyne drove over to the priests to see Father Liston [sic]<sup>1</sup> whether nothing could be done to save Bo[u]lton—apparently their mission was fruitless but Mrs. MacTavish felt from something Father Liston must have said to her that there was reason to hope. *Lestanc?*<sup>2</sup>

A dreadful gloom hangs over everyone. It seems more and more certain that Wm. Gaddee has not been killed but is confined in secret. A man outside one of the bastions heard a voice speaking through one of the small openings and saying—[“] Is it daylight yet?[”]

Sabine who is a prisoner in the Fort also seems to be forgotten by everybody.

John Taylor one of the prisoners captured on Thursday was one of the delegates to the late convention and is one of those who was condemned to be shot but was pardoned. Scott & Parker are supposed to be the other two.

Mr. Bannatyne went down to the Fort to see Riel about the mail going out—that if he (Riel) wished to stop the New Nation going out he Mr. Bannatyne would pledge that none but letters would go into the bag—this was done so that the mail might not be delayed.

A report was that Provencher would suffer if he happened to be caught by the French this side of the lines but for what reason is not known.

Riel was sitting on one of the bastions during a great part of the afternoon. Pierre Delorme went home to-day and said he would not return to the Fort in a hurry.

The American Consul was not at all well received by Riel it is said when he went to plead for Bo[u]lton’s life.

<sup>1</sup> Père Lestanc.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in another hand.

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Mr. Gay the mysterious stranger is now living in the Fort altogether having moved his bag and baggage there—what for no one knows.

*Sunday, 20th February, 1870*

Weather clear and frosty.

At one O'Clock this morning the French council decided that Capt. Bo[u]lton's sentence should be commuted—but it is not known what will be done either with him or the other prisoners. Miss MacVicar not being able to get Mr. Bannatyne to go with her to intercede with Riel for Capt. Bo[u]lton's life called on Mr. James Ross and induced that gentleman to go with her to the Fort. Ross was what is called three sheets in the wind at the time. Miss MacVicar when she entered the room where Riel was—evidently having made up her mind for a scene threw herself on her knees crying [""] Mercy! mercy! mercy! ["] Everybody except the lady herself was disgusted. Mr. Bannatyne was obliged to open the bags of the Mail before Riel—(D. A. Smith—)<sup>2</sup> and when the latter looked over all the letters until he came to rather a bulky one addressed to James Thorburn, M.D. Toronto which he opened thinking that it might contain a newspaper but he found it to be one of Justitia's<sup>3</sup> letters to the Globe—he however kept it over saying that he would like to read it all and sent the rest of the letters on.

*Present Archd.  
McLean &  
all<sup>1</sup>*

An expedition of over fifty men on horseback was started down the settlement under charge of Le Pine<sup>4</sup> & Isiore Goulait<sup>5</sup> to search for Dr. Schultz. And as soon as they had started from Fort Garry the following persons who had been detained by Riel were let out to their homes—Archdeacon McLean—James Ross—Miss MacVicar—H. M. Robinson, A. G. B. Bannatyne, and Dan Develin. The party in search of Dr. Schultz found his wife in the house of John Tait<sup>6</sup>—but no Dr. could be found—not being satisfied with the answer of John Tait they took him prisoner back with them to Fort Garry. Alex. Fisher<sup>7</sup> and another man went down to the Stone Fort recon[n]oitering—they visited the Indians in that direction. Some one told them that there were 60 men in the Lower Fort and they were returning to give Riel that information when they met Myles McDermott who took them to the

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in another hand.

<sup>2</sup> Insertion in another hand.

<sup>3</sup> Begg himself.

<sup>4</sup> Ambroise Lépine.

<sup>5</sup> Elzéar Goulet.

<sup>6</sup> John Tait, miller of Parkdale, Kildonan.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Fisher, *métis*, son or nephew of George Fisher of Prairie du Chien.





DR. JOHN CHRISTIAN SCHULTZ (1840-1896)

The portrait is undated, but is obviously one of Schultz as a young man.

*(Courtesy Amherstburg Museum)*



Stone Fort and showed them the contrary. Rev. Mr. Pritchard<sup>1</sup> preached in the Cathedral instead of Archdeacon McLean.

*Monday, 21st February, 1870*

To-day was very cold frosty and clear.

The houses where Dr. Schultz is reported to have taken refuge is Mr. John Tait's, Rev. Mr. Gairdner's, Mr. Murray's and Andw. Mowatt's.<sup>2</sup> It is said that Dr. Schultz told Mrs. Rowand that Mrs. Bannatyne and Mrs. Begg when they were down the settlement the other day were nearly taken prisoners on suspicion of being spies. Oh! valorous age. Glory to such men and such deeds to even think of interfering with two respectable ladies when travelling—a plucky thought of the English Army if not a plucky deed. The French in Fort Garry are bound to have Dr. Schultz dead or alive if he is in the country—nothing else will now satisfy them. Reports are strong about Sioux & Cree Indians coming down to attack the settlement, but Mr. Wm. Tait from Headingly was down to-day and heard nothing of it.

It is reported that John Taylor went home from the convention to Headingly and reported that Messrs. Robt. & Wm. Tait had taken the oath to Riel and sold their parishes—that Mr. Bannatyne had told him (Taylor) that if he would take the oath he might keep on the Post Office at Headingly if not it would be taken from him. Riel has sent a force of thirty men to the White Horse Plains to protect the settlers should the Indians try to do any damage. Mr. John Tait is still a prisoner but is it is said quite comfortable. Riel desired that Mr. D. A. Smith should go and see the English settlers about uniting which Mr. Smith agreed to and he has gone down with Hy. McDermott to see and urge upon the people the necessity of union. St. Andrews, St. Pauls, St. James, & St. John Parishes have decided upon going into the Provisional Government—the first Parish has elected its councillors—already.

Bishop Taché has been heard from in Canada and is expected to come right on to Red River.

Mail came in as usual—a heavy one.

Col. De Salaberry leaves for Canada on Thursday.

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Samuel Pritchard, 1828–1913, curate of St. Paul's, Middlechurch, 1866–1870, and teacher in St. John's College School.

<sup>2</sup> These were all well known Red River people. Schultz had actually taken refuge with Robert Macbeth (see note 7 on p. 271) in Kildonan, and while the search parties passed sat revolver in hand, determined to die rather than be taken.



*Tuesday, 22nd February, 1870.*

Weather mild and very pleasant—cold however towards night.

Last evening there was a general pressing in of horses by the French—stables were visited in the neighbourhood of the town and wherever found horses were taken off without leave or license. This was preparatory to another expedition to hunt up Schultz—a large party headed by Riel himself having set out for the Stone Fort last night. They returned this morning about half past eight O'Clock without having found him they were in search of. They took with them Mr. John Tait whom they restored to his home. While down the settlement they visited and ransacked the Stone Fort—taking the keys of all but the provision store away with them when they left. It was said Jimmy from Cork who was with the party shot a man but this turned out to be incorrect he only having shot in the air to frighten some one. Schultz is reported to have left for Portage La Prairie and to have gone on to Canada in company with Mr. Mair—but this is only report. It is also said that Riel while down on the expedition last night was disguised so that his best friend would not have known him—the disguise was said to consist part[ly] of a long red beard.

Wm. Drever Jnr. & Dr. Lynch are intending to leave for Canada to-morrow some time if Riel allows them. In the absence of Dr. Lynch Dr. O'Donnell is to act in his stead in paying off the men enrolled by Dennis.<sup>1</sup> Bishop Taché it is said left Canada for Red River on the 8th of this month and is expected to arrive here in a day or two.

The mail went out to-night but no newspapers are yet allowed to leave the country.

The New Nation is to go on with its publication as usual.

Bishop Machray sent up word to the Portage people to induce them to join the Provisional Government.

Reports of Sioux and Cree Indians coming down are still the rage.

*Wednesday, 23rd February, 1870*

Weather not cold but pleasant.

Judge Black is still very doubtful about accepting the position of delegate to Canada on account of the extreme ill health of his sister. The Bishop of Rupert's Land if he could be induced to go would be the proper man for the situation should Judge Black not go. Col. De Salaberry speaks of leaving for Canada on Thursday unless Bishop Taché does not arrive when he will wait till next week.

<sup>1</sup> Lynch's authorization to O'Donnell is in P.A.M., Red River Disturbances.

H. F. O'Lone and Alfred H. Scott are doing their best to try and break the arrangement of having the Town of Winnipeg joined to the Parish of St. John's for election purposes, but it is doubtful whether they will succeed. Notices were posted to-day that the election of a representative for the Parish of St. Johns and Town of Winnipeg would take place at the School house near the English Cathedral at 10 O'Clock.

Accordingly the meeting was held as appointed. Archdeacon McLean was called to the chair. Mr. James Ross gave in an account of his actions as delegate from St. Johns to the late convention in a well worded speech—for which he received the thanks of the meeting. Mr. James Ross then stated that for reasons of his own he could not come before the meeting as a candidate for the councillorship. Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne was then nominated by Magnus Brown<sup>1</sup> and unanimously elected councillor for both the parish & town. Mr. Coldwell secretary of the meeting.

The Ball in honour of Washington's birthday did not come off this evening for want of funds.

Maurice Lowman it is said took the oath of allegiance to the Provisional Government to-day and left for Portage La Prairie.

*Thursday, 24th February, 1870*

Weather beautifully mild and pleasant.

Mail bags came in to-day almost empty the mail not having reached Pembina and the mail carrier reported badly frozen.

Riel was taken very ill this morning at Hy. Coutus house being threatened with an attack of brain fever. The priests and sisters visited him and towards afternoon he became somewhat better and in the evening was conveyed to the Fort. Riel's mother was in attendance also.

A large force some say three hundred men are stationed in and near Lane's Fort<sup>2</sup> to watch the Sioux & Cree Indians. Some Portage people are down and are not allowed to return home without a pass and some of them are to be obliged to take the oath. J. B. Holmes<sup>3</sup> was brought down to Fort Garry in charge of a guard.

<sup>1</sup> A Magnus Brown, of Headingly, was one of the Portage party captured on February 17. This Magnus Brown cannot be identified.

<sup>2</sup> Lane's Post (so called after W. D. Lane, its manager) of the Hudson's Bay Company, the present Pigeon Lake on (old) Highway Number 1, some twenty miles west of Fort Garry. It was operated as an outlying post and as a cattle ranch as early as 1857 at least, when it is mentioned by Hind.

<sup>3</sup> J. B. Holmes of High Bluff. See No. III below.

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Donald A. Smith and Archdeacon McLean are up the Portage way to try and induce the people up there to unite with the whole settlement. It is to be hoped they will do good.

Wm. Tait has been appointed by the people of Headingly as their councillor.

It is said they are killing and eating the cattle in Lane's Fort for the use of the men stationed in and around there.

Dr. Lynch and Wm. Drever Jnr. started for Canada to-day—the former saw Boulton before he left. It is said that while Boulton was under sentence of death he behaved in a brave calm and resigned manner—worthy of a true soldier. Some of the party lately captured are very much down at the mouth especially John Taylor and Chas. Millan—the latter did not belong to the party but was only accompanying them on his way home from a visit to one of the Bannermans.

The New Nation came out to-day in a different style from the issue that was seized—it had an extra as well.

*Friday, 25th February, 1870*

Weather mild and pleasant.

Riel is reported somewhat better.

Men and horses have been sent to bring in Bishop Taché—he is expected in to-morrow. There are a large number of horses in the Fort some of whom have died from sheer overwork in the late expeditions. A man was found dead in his bed in Fort Garry—the cause is not known.

Wm. Dease and Laboncan Dauphinais were yesterday required to take the oath of allegiance to the Provisional Government. Governor MacTavish still keeps very poorly and there are grave doubts about his living till spring.

Chas. Garrett was to-day arrested on information laid before Riel by Parisien for non payment of wages to the latter. Garrett was taken by two armed men before Lépine when he stated that he offered Parisien to lay it before any two men in the town and would abide by the result of their decision—as Parisien Garrett said had wasted his goods while he (Garrett) was in prison. Lépine held that Garrett's offer was fair and appointed Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne and Onis Monchamp to decide the matter at nine O'Clock to-morrow morning.

Wm. O'Donohue nicknamed Uriah Heap<sup>1</sup> is commencing to cultivate a beard.

<sup>1</sup> By Robert Cunningham of the *Globe*. See No. XIX below.



Flat Boat McLean<sup>1</sup> is not now a prisoner.

Bishop Taché is reported to be bringing with him one of the members of the Ottawa government—supposed to be Langevin.<sup>2</sup>

Everything is very quiet—hope it does not preceed [sic] a storm.

*Saturday, 26th February, 1870*

Weather fine in the morning but in the afternoon a severe snow storm came on.

No word of Bishop Taché.

Mr. Bannatyne and O. Monchamp decided this morning in the case of Parisien versus Garrett.

Patrice Breland and Pierre Laveiller are in charge of the men at Lane's Fort under orders of Riel.

Mr. D. A. Smith returned from the Portage way in company with Archdeacon McLean. The whole settlement has now joined in the Provisional Government.

The balance of the English councillors are as follows.

Portage La Prairie	Wm. Garrioch. <sup>3</sup>
High Bluff	John Norquay. <sup>4</sup>
Poplar Point	Geo. Gunn. <sup>5</sup>
St. James	James McKay. <sup>6</sup>

The Americans do not seem to have been successful in their petition in favor of two councillors for the Town of Winnipeg in addition to the twelve already appointed. Eight or nine of the American residents are not in favor of the petition.

No more word of the Sioux and Cree Indians. Capt. Bo[u]lton and Riel have many arguments together on the state of the country and Bo[u]lton it is said is beginning to see things in a different light from what he did.

Col. Rankin<sup>7</sup> late member of the Canadian Parliament is expected here in two or three days—what he is coming for is not known but it is supposed

<sup>1</sup> John McLean. See note 3 on p. 309.

<sup>2</sup> The Honourable Hector Louis Langevin, 1826–1906, in 1870 Minister of Public Works in succession to McDougall.

<sup>3</sup> William Garrioch, Jr., brother of John Garrioch of the December convention.

<sup>4</sup> The Honourable John Norquay, 1841–1891, school master, later member of the Legislative Assembly and Executive Council of Manitoba; Premier, 1878–1887.

<sup>5</sup> George Gunn. See note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>6</sup> Later Honourable James McKay. See note 1 on p. 197.

<sup>7</sup> Colonel Arthur Rankin, of Thornfield and Windsor, Ontario; M.P. for Essex, 1854–56 and 1858–62. Rankin went to Red River to promote a railway scheme of

## 324 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

to be "spec". He is an old friend of H. McKenney. The mail went out as usual—with an unusually large number of "New Nations".

Riel is getting quite better.

The name of the man who died so suddenly in the fort was Benjamin Beauchemin<sup>1</sup>—he died in Capt. Bo[u]lton's room and had medical attendance but too late.

*Sunday, 27th February, 1870*

A severe snow storm raged all day.

Many people on account of the large quantity of snow that has fallen this winter predict a flood in the spring.

Bishop Taché was expected by some to arrive to-day but he did not come.

The usual services took place to-day. Nothing unusual occurred to-day.

Riel is quite recovered from his recent attack.

On the other hand Governor MacTavish is still keeping very low—and there are great fears about his living till spring.

The company's officers although apparently free are still pretty much in the light of prisoners.

Rev. Geo. Young is allowed to visit the prisoners regularly in the capacity of clergyman but other friends are forbidden admittance.

Maurice Lowman is reported to be a prisoner in the hands of the French at White Horse Plains—although only the other day he had a pass from Riel to go to Portage La Prairie after he (Lowman) had first taken the oath of allegiance.

*Monday, 28th February, 1870*

The weather was clear bright and warm but the immense quantity of snow that had fallen made the roads very heavy and travelling difficult.

Riel took possession of all the keys in Fort Garry belonging to the several stores not even excepting the root house.

It is reported that James Ross and Thos. Bunn were both refused admission to Fort Garry—they were both of them it is said partly intoxicated at the time—the two gentlemen denounce the Provisional Government and declare they will resign their positions of Chief Justice & Secretary.

Riel is killing the cattle belonging to the Company at Lane's Fort White some kind ; on being expelled by Riel he smuggled out in a sack of flour a petition to the Canadian Government signed by twenty leading citizens asking for a railway charter. Minnesota Historical Society, Taylor Papers, G. L. Becker to J. W. Taylor, April 7, 1870.

<sup>1</sup> Not otherwise identified, but see note 1 on p. 286.

Horse Plains—70 are reported to have been taken by him already and these are to be followed by others. They (the French) kill the animals one by one as they want them.

Wm. Fraser went up to Fort Garry with one Flett to get a pass for a friend of the latter. Riel however at first refused to give the pass until Flett took the oath of allegiance to the Provisional Government. Wm. Fraser remonstrated with Riel on this course as not having been understood by the English settlers that persons were to be required to take an oath of allegiance. Riel said he has instructed Mr. Smith to so tell them during his late trips amongst them. Mr. Fraser desired that Mr. Smith himself should be consulted. On Mr. Smith being sent for he said that he had not understood Mr. Riel in the way he now stated but that he considered that the English were sincere in joining the Provisional Government. Matters passed off pleasantly then and Mr. Flett was promised his pass without having to take the oath.

Mr. Riel stated to Mr. Fraser that he heard Bishop Taché was coming in but that he would not be allowed this side of Pembina until he knew the state of matters here.

No mail arrived to-day on account of storm.

*Tuesday, 1st March, 1870*

Weather still fine warm and pleasant the snow melting and dropping from the eaves of the houses.

Mail man arrived this morning with empty bags—no mail having arrived as far as Pembina on account of storms.

A guard was sent it is said after Wm. Drever Jnr. and Dr. Lynch to bring them back but word came that they were across the lines and it is probable they will not dare to take them from there—no reason is known for their being wanted back.

The Fur Warehouse in Fort Garry was opened to-day and the furs counted by Riel and his men—it is reported that there were 18500 marten alone.

Riel has despatched messengers to the winterers and French Half Breeds in the interior to come in in the spring and on no account to sell their pemmican to the H.B.C. as the Provisional Government will buy it. He also sent word for them to come prepared to fight if necessary the incomers in the spring.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No corroborative evidence of this statement has been found ; but see Schmidt's *Memoirs* No. xv below, and *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 29, evidence of Taché, Taché to Howe, May 7, 1870.

## 326 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

A report was around to-day that Dr. Cowan was again arrested and that Dease was in chains—but this turned out afterwards to be untrue. The French are walking into the Company's goods at a great rate. It is thought by some they will attack the free traders after the Company.

No word of Bishop Taché yet.

The mail went out as usual.

The Canadian prisoners in Fort Garry have been separated from those belonging to the country under confinement and the former are kept a great deal more strict than were those who were released some time ago. Scott one of the prisoners is in irons for having been indiscreet in the use of his tongue while in prison.<sup>1</sup>

Things look as gloomy almost as ever—no word of our delegates leaving for Canada yet. No council of the English & French combined has yet been called.

*Wednesday, 2nd March, 1870*

Weather warm and pleasant.

No word of Bishop Taché yet.

Col. De Salaberry nor Mr. Smith have not left for Canada yet.

Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot was to call on Riel to-day to see when the delegates are to leave for Ottawa—if they do not leave soon it is said he will not go as other duties will prevent him.

It is reported that Riel has consented to grant two councillors for the Town and that H. F. O'Lone and Alfred H. Scott are to run—the election to take place to-morrow night. This if true will give dissatisfaction.

Riel confined two or three of his own men for drunkenness last night he having said that it was high time to make examples.

A great number of people are speaking of leaving the settlement in the spring expecting hard and perhaps troublesome times at that time.

The packet from the North arrived at the Stone Fort on the 28th ulto. and the letters for the several parties were distributed to-day. Col. De Salaberry has been drilling the Schoolboys over at St. Boniface and to-day he said they were as perfect in their drill as old soldiers.

Some of the prisoners lately released are going to Canada this winter.

Some old settlers predict that we will have no flood in the spring. Riel it is said has his quarters in Fort Garry sumptuously fixed up with the furniture and fixing from Dr. Schultz' house.

<sup>1</sup> This was Thomas Scott, and the note a prelude to his execution.



Mr. Charles Mair has left Portage La Prairie for parts unknown.<sup>1</sup>

*Thursday, 3rd March, 1870*

Weather still fine warm and pleasant.

Mr. Robert Tait showed an order to-day which he received from Riel ordering him to run his mill as people were suffering from its being stopped.

The saloons have commenced to issue shin plasters or tickets for one shilling each in lieu of change.

Silver and gold coins are becoming more and more scarce every day.

It is said the families of the French Half Breeds at White Horse Plains are being fed from the beef and stores taken from Lane's Fort.

No more word of the election of the two candidates as councillors for the town—it is probable Riel will not grant it.

A meeting of the first council of the united Provisional Government will be held on Tuesday next—or Monday perhaps—notice of which is to appear in the New Nation. A report is abroad that the prisoners in Fort Garry are to be released on Tuesday. It is reported on good authority that Ex President Bruce applied some time ago to his successor Riel for relief in the shape of charity—responsible parties saw Bruce's letter to Riel praying for the same.

The French they say are now actually taking away the Company's goods from Fort Garry by the bale—and it is expected that the forts in the interior will be seized by the Half Breeds around & in them.

A large mail arrived this afternoon from which it appears Bishop Taché had not left Ottawa on the 15 ulto—still he may be here any day.

*Friday, 4th March, 1870*

The weather to-day was clear warm and pleasant.

This morning the news spread that Thos. Scott one of the prisoners was condemned to be shot to-day at twelve O'Clock—this was not believed at first by anyone but some time after when it became known that the lumber and nails had been procured for his coffin people began to realize it. Rev. Geo. Young at the request of Scott went and stayed with him to

<sup>1</sup> At the end of February, Mair, who had made his way from Kildonan to Portage alone, thus escaping capture on February 17, left the Portage with J. Setter to make a journey by White Mud river roundabouts over the plains to St. Paul; see his Diary, Mair Papers, Q.U.L. In many ways it was a more notable feat than Schultz's and G. D. McVicar's trip by the Winnipeg river and Duluth to St. Paul.

prepare him for his end. Paper pens and ink were furnished the doomed man to write to his friends. At about twelve O'Clock a.m. a large crowd gathered around the side door leading into Fort Garry. Scott was then brought out—it is said he prayed as he walked—a bandage was then put over his eyes and he knelt.

The following men were detailed to fire the fatal shots.

P. Champagne.	François Thibault.
Marcell Roi.	Augustin Parisien.
Cap Dechamp.	A canadian that used to work with Dr. Schultz. <sup>1</sup>

On a given signal four of the guns were fired (two missing fire) and Scott fell forward pierced in four places—he was not yet dead but struggled on the ground. The Canadian then went up and shot Scott—the ball from the revolver passed in at the ear of the unfortunate man and passed out at his mouth.<sup>2</sup> The corpse was then put into a rough coffin and placed in one of the bastions. A deep gloom has settled over the settlement on account of this deed.

A letter has been received from Mr. Kittson<sup>3</sup> at St. Pauls stating that Bishop Taché had telegraphed him to have horses ready at St. Cloud to bring his Lordship on his way to Abercrombie and also to have horses ready at the latter place to bring him on to Red River. Bishop Taché is therefore expected in to-morrow. The New Nation is waiting for some orders to be given it for publication by Riel and is expected to be out to-morrow.

*Saturday, 5th March, 1870*

Weather fine warm and pleasant.

Scott the young man shot yesterday is to be buried [sic] inside the walls of Fort Garry a little to one side of the big gate.

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Champagne, 1832–1899, *métis* of Ste. Anne-des-Chênes. Marcel Roi, circa 1835–?, *métis* of St. Norbert. Cap Dechamp: possibly François Capistan Ducharme. François Thibault, resident at St. Boniface from 1860 to 1880. Possibly Augustin Parisien, 1835–?, of St. Vital; but uncertain. The sixth man was François Guillmette; see *Preliminary Investigation and Trial of Ambroise D. Lépine*, p. 67. Guillmette was killed south of the border after 1870 by persons unknown.

<sup>2</sup> Much has been made of this seeming cruelty; it was, however, the *coup de grâce*, delivered to make sure that death was as quick as possible. Begg's report tends to support the later rumours that Scott was not killed outright by the firing party.

<sup>3</sup> Norman W. Kittson, 1814–1888, Canadian-American of St. Paul; trader and freighter; son-in-law of Narcisse Marion of St. Boniface.

The following Official orders were issued to-day from the Office of the "New Nation"—

## OFFICIAL ORDERS

It is hereby ordered that the Town of Winnipeg be and shall be hereafter the Capital of the North West.

That the bounds of said town be as follows :—

The Assiniboine River on the South ; Red River on the East ;

McDermott's Creek on the North, and on the West by Spence's Creek ;

In response to a petition from the citizens of the Town of Winnipeg, asking for a separate representation in the Provisional Government ; and protest against having said town consolidated with St. John's Parish ; That the said Town of Winnipeg be entitled to a representation by two members in the Provisional Government ; and that the election for said members be held at the Engine House, between the hours of three and five O'Clock p.m. on Saturday March 5th 1870.

By order of the President,

LOUIS SCHMIDT,

Asst. Secy.

Dated Fort Garry Head Quarters Provisional Government March 5th 1870.<sup>1</sup>

R. Patterson<sup>2</sup> arrived to-day in company with Col. Rankin from Canada—and reports that Bishop Taché was likely to be in to-night or to-morrow. His Lordship had telegraphed Mr. Kittson to the effect that if the delegates from this country to Ottawa had not arrived in St. Paul to detain them in that city till he arrived. This looks as if Bishop Taché had full powers to act. His Lordship also telegraphed Mr. Kittson to have horses ready for him at St. Cloud so as not to delay him and also to have a fresh change waiting at Abercrombie. When Patterson passed Abercrombie they were expecting the arrival of Bishop Taché a couple of days after—the roads would be broken for his lordship and having fresh horses he would consequently be likely to arrive either to-night or to-morrow. It is also reported that there are two commissioners on the way from England to this country—this looks like business.<sup>3</sup>

The Bishop of Rupert's Land went to Riel and begged for the body of Scott to have it interred in the Presbyterian Churchyard—his request was however refused and Scott is buried inside the Fort. Col. Rankin

<sup>1</sup> *New Nation*, March 4, 1870 ; E. H. Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, p. 914.

<sup>2</sup> Robert Patterson of Montreal, Canada ; a fur buyer.

<sup>3</sup> The source of this rumour, which was quite unfounded, unless an allusion to the appointment of Sir Clinton Murdoch as Special Commissioner at Ottawa, has not been discovered.

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was in close confab with H. McKenney, Oscar Malmoras (American Consul) and Major Robinson of the "New Nation".

The Election Meeting took place in the Engine House according to appointment. There was a small attendance principally Americans and Bob O'Lone and Alfred H. Scott were elected councillors for the town. Triplet, O. Monchamp's barkeeper[,] was arrested to-day for saying that there were no white men in the Fort on account of Scott's death. Murdoch McLeod one of the prisoners in Fort Garry was put in irons to-day—it is supposed for his activity in attempting to raise the English against the French—it is said that he and one Setter were employed by Schultz and Mair to go about and excite the people—it is suspected that John Taylor, the prisoner, has become frightened and revealed facts—as he says he was forced to join the Bo[u]lton party—it is whispered that Murdoch McLeod is likely to be shot—and it is reported that he was very indiscreet and savage with his tongue when he was being ironed.

Capt. Gay came in and left 30/- for the mail man to bring up his horse on his return from Scratching River—it is not known where Gay intends going.

The mail went out as usual to-night.

(Dont forget Gaddee)<sup>1</sup>

*Sunday, 6th March, 1870*

The weather was fine and bracing without being too cold.

It was reported to-day that a split had taken place amongst the French in Fort Garry for some trifling reason but this is not known to be correct. Bishop Taché was expected in to-day but did not arrive—it was reported that he was this side of Scratching river.

It is said that Col. De Salaberry went and took supplies from the French in the Stores at Fort Garry.

It is rumored that the Crown Commissioners are in company with Bishop Taché.

The usual services took place to-day.

*Monday, 7th March, 1870*

The weather to-day was very fine becoming however cold and frosty towards evening.

The New Nation did not come out yet—on account of Riel having

<sup>1</sup> Note at bottom of page.



instructed Major Robinson to show his description of Scott's execution before publishing the paper. Copies of the Paper intended for foreign distribution have been struck off without having any mention made of the execution in them; it is only those intended for the settlement that are stopped. Next weeks issue for foreign subscribers will contain the account of Scott's death—and those of this week for the settlement containing the same account will be out it is expected to-morrow.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Taché did not arrive to-day but is fully expected to-morrow. Col. De Salaberry will await his arrival.

The American party in town are split amongst themselves—a large number of them not agreeing with Scott and O'Lone in their late actions—the better class of Americans are holding aloof from any further interference in the troubles of the country.

Riel went up to White Horse Plains to-day.

Charles Nolin has been a prisoner for the last three days in Fort Garry on account of his having accused Riel during the late convention of having tried to interfere with his (Nolin's) election as a delegate.

The mail came in as usual it was a small one.

There are muttered rumors of another prisoner about to be shot—likely to be Murdoch McLeod.

Mail man heard no word of Bishop Taché's coming.

Capt. Gay and Louis Schmidt were away together on some mission the character of which is not known.

*Tuesday, 8th March, 1870*

Weather sharp and frosty—blustering blowing and drifting.

Bishop Taché did not arrive to-day although he is hourly expected. Jas. McKay has gone to meet Bishop Taché.

It is reported that a number of people have gone to meet his Lordship. The messengers intended for a mission to the winterers to keep their pemmican from the H.B.C. have not left yet and are said to be waiting for the arrival of Bishop Taché.

It is said they are preparing for his Lordship's reception at the church. Charles Nolin they say has been put out from the council—and is not recognised by Riel as a councillor.

Shocking reports are going about regarding Scott's death—some say that he did not die till evening and was then shot by Lépine to finish the work

<sup>1</sup> The number dated March 4 contains a discreet description of the trial and execution of Scott.

done at noon. Others that he lived for an hour or two after he was shot first and was then finished. Some say that he was sensible to the end and uttered the words [""] Oh! God ["] just before he sank back dead.<sup>1</sup> It is rumored that a difference arose in the French council regarding Murdoch McLeod—but this is not known to be true. However McLeod does not appear to be in any immediate danger of suffering death.

The mail went out as usual.

The New Nation came out today and had an account of Scott's execution which however had been revised by Riel before it was allowed to be printed.

The priests and sisters are taking goods it is said from Fort Garry by Riel's orders. Bishop Taché arrived at Rivière Sal[l]e this evening—no one was allowed to go and meet him. It is said Riel went to see him however.

*Wednesday, 9th March, 1870*

The weather was rather warmer than yesterday but still somewhat sharp although clear and pleasant.

A number of people went to meet Bishop Taché as he came from Rivière Sal[l]e. His Lordship drove first in company with Father Lestanc—then came James McKay with Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot—about 200 persons met the party at the church. Bishop Taché first entered the church and then went to the palace.

A number of Canadians are preparing to leave the settlement in company with Rev. Mr. Fletcher<sup>2</sup>—they expect to leave on Friday next.

Micizine Nolin was taken prisoner last night and put in chains in Fort Garry.

Jos. Hamblin<sup>3</sup> was also taken prisoner and is now in Fort Garry as such. Murdoch McLeod and Geo. Parker prisoners in Fort Garry are compelled to work—the former in chains—in carrying out the *human manure* from the Fort.

A guard of 20 men are placed over Bishop Taché and he is not allowed to see anyone.

<sup>1</sup> Here in this Red River rumour is to be found the beginning of the martyrology of Scott.

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend William Fletcher, Presbyterian minister who came to Red River in 1868, and conducted his ministry at Portage la Prairie.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Hamelin ; see note 1 on p. 264.

It was rumored that there was to be a meeting of the French to-night in Fort Garry to decide whether Bishop Taché is to be a prisoner or not. The first meeting of the Council of the Provisional Government took place to-day. Mr. Riel made a speech—referring to Bishop Taché as a commissioner—saying that he hoped to see and it was the duty of the council to assist in getting the confidence of the people established—he regretted having to keep a guard at White Horse Plains but that there was danger from Portage La Prairie quarter yet—he hoped to be able to withdraw the guard from about Lane's Fort soon. The council adjourned to meet again on Tuesday next.

*Thursday, 10th March, 1870*

Weather sharp but not unpleasant.

The names of the councillors present yesterday at the first meeting of the council of the Provisional Government

French—W. B. O'Donohue, John Bruce, Ambroise Lépine, Louis Schmidt, A. Beauchemin, Baptiste Tournon, Baptiste Beauchemin, Pierre Paranteau, Louis Lascerte.

English—A. G. B. Bannatyne, Wm. Fraser, Thos. Bunn, W. Garrioch, Geo. Gunn, John Norquay, E. Hayes,<sup>1</sup> A. H. Scott, H. F. O'Lone, Wm. Tait.

Mr. Ellwood claimed pay on account of having enrolled himself as a volunteer under Dennis—he was not generally known as a volunteer until now but had Dr. O'Donnell's orders to receive £10 Sterling on account of Canadian Government.

Dr. O'Donnell the gentleman left by Dr. Lynch to act as his attorney in paying the men enrolled under Dennis is reported to be paying out money to some extent on that account.

Angus McKay and John F. Grant were taken prisoners to-day.

At the solicitation of Rev. Mr. Fletcher and and [sic] Kenneth McKenzie the prisoners Mr. John McLean and son were released on account of the dangerous illness of Mrs. McLean.

Bishop Taché took 39 days in coming to Red River from Rome—four of which was [sic] spent in London and two in Ottawa leaving 33 days for the entire trip.

The man "Marion" who brought the Bishop from Abercrombie

<sup>1</sup> E. H. G. G. Hay, though the name is written Hayes in the *New Nation*, March 11, 1870, and in P.A.M., Records of the Legislative Council of Assiniboia. See note 2 on p. 189.

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reports that his Lordship on the road was frequently affected to tears—especially when he heard of the execution of Scott.

At the solicitation of Mr. Wm. Tait his nephew, Wm. Sutherland<sup>1</sup> prisoner in Fort Garry was released by Riel.

A good sized mail came in to-day.

*Friday, 11th March, 1870*

Weather sharp a cold wind but not unpleasant.

The prisoners H. Taylor and D. Taylor<sup>2</sup> have been released by Riel. The party of Canadians who intended to start for Canada to-day do not leave till to-morrow.

Bishop Taché visited Riel to-day in the Fort but the result of their interview is not known.

There was a report to-day that Jas. McKay is to be arrested.

The following notices were sent to the several councillors.

Mr.———

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the council of the Provisional Government to be held at Fort Garry on Tuesday 15th instant at 10 O'Clock a.m.

By order of the President

THOS. BUNN—Secy.

Head Quarters Provisional Government, Fort Garry 9th March 1870.

The New Nation came out to-day—it is the government organ and is controlled completely by Riel.

Some parties are speaking of the Rev. Mr. Fletcher as an English delegate to Ottawa.

A rumor was afloat that Bishop Taché intended resigning his position as Commissioner but this is not believed. Some word was also whispered about there being another Mass Meeting of the people—neither is this believed however.

*Saturday, 12th March, 1870*

Weather sharp but not unpleasant.

Fifteen persons were preparing to leave the settlement to-day—these include those who were to have started yesterday. The wife of the

<sup>1</sup> William Sutherland, of Portage la Prairie.

<sup>2</sup> Of Poplar Point.



Rev. Geo. Young and son as well as Miss MacVicar are amongst the number.

Rev. Mr. Fletcher is also in the party.

Mr. McArthur<sup>1</sup> of the firm of McArthur and Martin leaves to-day. He takes with him over £500 Sterling of orders on the Canadian Government for supplies furnished the men enrolled by Col. Dennis and captured by the French in Schultz' house. A party of those leaving for Canada left to-night and amongst them McArthur who received four hours' notice from Riel to leave the country else he would be made prisoner and confined in Fort Garry.

Riel is not over well inclined towards McArthur.

The Mail went out as usual to-night.

*Sunday, 13th March, 1870*

Weather clear and pleasant neither too warm nor too cold.

The usual services took place to-day.

A large number of people assembled in the cathedral at St. Boniface to hear Bishop Taché preach for the first time since his return. The church was crowded to excess.

His Lordship spoke very feelingly about the state of the country and his return amongst his people.

He said the Pope had handed him the letter one evening after a hard day's work in the council requesting his return to Red River. The Pope told him (Bishop Taché) that much as he would miss him it was his duty to return to his people. His Lordship then spoke of his journey—his stay in London—his rough voyage across the Atlantic—and his subsequent travels towards Red River. He said that Canada would do all that was just to the people of this country & commended them to use charity and forbearance to each other and to act in union together. He said he loved all Catholics & Protestants and would like to see all working in harmony. Bishop Taché was very much affected during portions of his address and the greater part of those who heard him shed tears while he spoke. Riel was in the church and it is said was very much affected during the sermon—shedding tears at times.

*Monday, 14th March, 1870*

To-day looked rather gloomy in the morning and broke out in a regular hurricane towards night—blowing and drifting heavily.

<sup>1</sup> Alexander McArthur. See note 3 on p. 212.

Some of the prisoners were released to-day amongst others Sabine at the solicitation of Rob. Tait—and Farquhar McLean<sup>1</sup> at the solicitation of Mr. A. G. B. Bannatyne. Mr. Bannatyne asked for the release of two[,] McLean and one McDonald[,] but unfortunately he used the name of Mr. James Ross. Riel said he was sorry that he had used the name of Ross as that gentleman was continually coming between him and his actions—but for Mr. Bannatyne's own sake he would release one of the two asked. Mr. B. then asked for McLean he having a larger family than McDonald. A small mail arrived to-day.

Col. De Salaberry along with the delegates from this country to Canada expect to leave here next Thursday.

Things look brighter a little since the arrival of Bishop Taché—people are moving about with more confidence. It is astonishing how little silver and gold is now in circulation—it seems as if people have been hoarding it up since our troubles commenced. Some parties in town have had to issue checks of their own for change.

The stoppage of the H.B.C. money box is greatly felt at present and will be more so if matters do not soon change.

A great many people are speaking of leaving the country in or before the spring—even natives of the country—things look gloomy for the future.

*Tuesday, 15th March, 1870*

To-day has been the stormiest day of the whole winter—it has blown a perfect hurricane of wind and snow all day and the drifts are something enormous.

The council met for the second time this morning but nothing was done before dinner as Riel and the French councillors did not make their appearance. Printed reports of the 1st Meeting of the council were circulated amongst the councillors to-day.

After dinner the Council again sat and Bishop Taché was present. He made an eloquent and touching speech—during which he condemned the doings of McDougall and Dennis and said that the Canadian Government and Imperial Government did the same. He said that his own commission was merely one of good will to the people of Red River but that the Canadian Government awaited delegates from this country to Ottawa and that he could make them certain that Canada would deal fairly by them. He read a telegraph from Mr. Howe to himself saying

<sup>1</sup> Farquhar McLean, of Portage la Prairie.

that the Government of Canada did not see anything so very difficult to be got over in the late Bill of Rights and that all could be arranged satisfactorily. He (Bishop Taché) pressed for union of the settlement and asked for the release of the prisoners in Fort Garry.

O'Donohue Scott and O'Lone did not look over happy at the prospect of a speedy union with Canada.

Riel consented to release one half the prisoners to-night and as soon as he heard from a certain quarter which he expected would be in a day or two he would release the balance. Riel also spoke of reinstating the H.B.C. as a commercial body at once, and conducting the Provisional Government on as near the footing of the late government as possible and that he would give up his place willingly and joyfully as President as soon as a proper governor came.<sup>1</sup>

The mail went out as usual.

*Wednesday, 16th March, 1870*

The weather to-day was fine and pleasant neither too warm nor too cold. The council met again to-day but nothing much was done—a committee was formed to arrange a constitution for the Provisional Government and the council meets again on Friday to hear it.<sup>2</sup>

Seventeen of the prisoners in Fort Garry were released last night and some more were liberated to-day amongst whom was Capt. Bo[u]lton.

It was reported to-day that all the prisoners would be released to-morrow. Everything is working harmoniously and there is every prospect of peace and a return of confidence amongst the Settlers.

Mr. Donald A. Smith in company with Mr. Hy. McDermott went down to-day to see Judge Black probably about his going as a delegate to Canada. A discovery was to-day made that certain Americans residing in the town were conspiring to make a raid on Messrs. Bannatyne & Begg's store and the Fort and their making for across the lines with whatever booty they could obtain—this information is not known to many and was told to put the parties threatened on their guard.

The American Consul is suddenly called away on what he says his own business—from his story it appears that a man in Chicago with whom the Consul is interested in some property has sold it at a nominal value and Genl. Malmoras suspects has pocketed the difference, his (the Consuls) share of which is between \$4000 and \$6000. It is thought

<sup>1</sup> A report which agrees with that in the *New Nation*, March 18, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> P.A.M., Records of the Legislative Council of Assiniboia, p. 13.

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by some however that this is a blind and that he is recalled to Washington.<sup>1</sup> Col. De Salaberry visited Judge Black yesterday probably regarding Mr. B's going as a delegate to Canada.

*Thursday, 17th March, 1870*

The weather was fine warm and pleasant.

The Committee to form a constitution for the Provisional Government commenced their duties to-day and sat at work all day. This being St. Patrick's day a salute was fired from Fort Garry in honour of the occasion and the bells at St. Boniface rang merrily in the morning. Service was held in the French Cathedral at which Bishop Taché preached in English.

In the evening a dinner was given in the Government House in Fort Garry—at which Father Dugast's band performed. There were several of the Catholic clergy present and the members of the council on Committee [duty?] were invited to the feast. Speeches were made and the evening passed off pleasantly and without any discord.

The mail bags came in empty to-day on account of the late storm.

The party of French from the Portage returned this evening having with them three prisoners—Spence (late delegate) McKay & Tait. They are detained at the Fort to answer some enquiries about some goods taken to the Portage from Lane's Fort—they are not in close confinement. General Malmros has created Major H. M. Robinson Vice consul in the former's absence at Chicago. It is supposed that Malmros will not return to this country and that Robinson will get the appointment.

Col. Robinson,<sup>2</sup> Major Robinson's brother has gone to Pembina to erect a hotel at that place in anticipation of troops being stationed there—which is more than probable in the spring—indeed there is some speculation going on regarding the future prospects of both Pembina and St. Jo.—land being located &c. at these points for speculation purposes.

*Friday, 18th March, 1870*

Weather warm and spring like.

Mr. D. A. Smith left to-day for Canada. His mode of conveyance was by a train of dogs.

<sup>1</sup> Malmros left because of the embarrassment he feared the publication of his despatches by the American Government would cause.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Robinson has not been further identified.



General Malmoras left also to-day for the United States—he took a horse and sleigh.

The council met again to-day but adjourned till Monday as the Committee on a Constitution had not finished its labours.

Col. Rankin is going about the settlement with a petition to the Canadian Government for a grant of land to build a railway. He is aided by his old friend Hy. McKenney.

Capt. Bo[u]lton was over at St. Boniface and spent the day with Bishop Taché and the priests—in the evening a concert was given by Father Dugast and his boy band in the college room. Col. De Salaberry who while in the settlement has been drilling the college boys put them through their facings much to the admiration of the invited guests. There were present—Capt. Bo[u]lton, Col. De Salaberry, A. G. B. Bannatyne, J. H. McTavish and wife, A. Begg & wife, James Ross, Wm. Coldwell—H. F. O'Lone—A. H. Scott—Wm. O'Donohue, John Kennedy, Mrs. Miles McDermott and others. Bishop Taché sat in the chair of state.

*Did not attend<sup>1</sup>*

The New Nation was stopped again to-night—it appears the report of the council proceedings especially that touching on Bishop Taché's appearance before the Legislative body was not according to the taste of the President. Bishop Taché has visited Gov. MacTavish twice already. His Lordship feels the position of the country very much but feels also that the best thing to do is to obey and stick to the Provisional Government.

*Saturday, 19th March, 1870*

Weather very fine and warm spring like—the snow is beginning to feel the power of the sun.

The Committee to form the Constitution sat again to-day late in the afternoon but did not get through much business and have not yet finished their labours. Bishop Taché has been very much wronged in being accused of being a mover in the present & past troubles. He is a staunch loyal gentleman and a firm friend of Canada but at the same time a true friend to his own people in Red River. Had the government of Canada taken his advice at the outset, it would have been more fortunate here.

Major Robinson has resigned his position as editor of the New Nation—utterly disgusted with it. He is now settling up its affairs and will then hand it over to the authorities. It is not known who will be the next

<sup>1</sup> Marginal, in another hand. Reference not known.

editor but it is suspected that James Ross may take hold of it—it is very likely. None of the last issue are allowed to leave the country.

The French tell some queer stories of people at the Portage when they were up there lately. Woman and children were moved off—and men were actually found hid in cellars and such—like one man (Jim D.) being nearly buried in potatoes in a cellar to hid[e] himself.

Judge Black has decided upon accepting the position of delegate to Canada and leaves on Wednesday in company with his sister.

Col. Rankin received six hours notice from Riel to leave the country—various reasons were assigned—one on account of his petition to Canada for a railway land grant when as yet Canada is not acknowledged here—another that he was up to no good and was better out of the country. Rankin is an annexationist.<sup>1</sup>

The Mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 20th March, 1870*

The weather was very fine and pleasant.

All the prisoners in Fort Garry except Malcolm McLeod<sup>2</sup> were released to-day.

McLeod it is said will be released to-morrow.

The keys of the Fort Garry stores are to be given up by Riel to the H.B.C. this week.

The usual services took place to-day.

It is reported that Col. Rankin came to Red River for no good object and that he endeavoured to interfere with the influence of Bishop Taché to destroy it as much as possible both on the way to and in Red River.

*Monday, 21st March, 1870*

The weather beautiful and spring like—the rays of the sun are beginning to be very warm.

The family of Henry McKenney left to-day for the States. It is whispered that he (McKenney) fears the coming of the Canadian Government to Red River on account of old debts left behind him some years ago in Canada.

Col. De Salaberry left to-day on his way to Canada. He will go as far as Rivière Salle where he will be joined by Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot to-morrow.

<sup>1</sup> This is doubtful, although Rankin is a figure of mystery. See the account of his dismissal by Riel in O'Donnell, *Manitoba As I Saw It*, pp. 104–105.

<sup>2</sup> Murdoch McLeod.

The Council met again to-day but adjourned till tomorrow—the Committee on the Constitution are still busy with their labours and are not yet finished with them.

Riel is busy preparing the papers for the delegates to Canada. The mail came in to-day empty. The late storm must have been very severe on the plains.

The “New Nation” is stopped now altogether and Major Robinson holds the keys of the premises until all the business is settled up. No one has appeared as yet to carry on the publication.

The messengers sent to the winterers were recalled before they executed their mission.

The qualifications of a member of the Red River Council are that he shall own £200 stg. worth of property over and above all debts and must be a British subject—much to the disgust of certain Americans.

Scott and Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot are to leave for Ottawa to-morrow.

Things are gradually settling down to the usual routine of affairs and more confidence is being felt amongst people.

*Tuesday, 22nd March, 1870*

The weather still warm and pleasant the snow is beginning to feel the effects of the warm sun.

The council met again to-day but did not do much business—it was after twelve O’Clock a.m. when they assembled. They adopted certain clauses in the constitution presented by the Committee and then adjourned till to-morrow.

Judge Black has determined upon leaving to-morrow for Ottawa—on his mission as delegate. Capt Bo[u]lton expects to accompany him.

Wm. Coldwell was appointed Secretary of the Council for the English side—the one for the French has not been appointed.

Thos. Bunn & Schmidt are Secretaries of State.

One Kittson an escaped prisoner from the first lot taken from Schultz’ house was recaptured and is now in Fort Garry but it is not expected that he will be there long.

W. B. Hall<sup>1</sup> who was supposed to be on his way to Canada—visited the Fort of his own accord in company with one of the priests—it appears he hid himself for some time and has now come to place himself at the mercy of Riel.

Malcolm McLeod has not been liberated yet.

<sup>1</sup> Not identified.

It is reported that Riel intends making Schultz' house the Government House as soon as he gives up the keys of Fort Garry to the H.B.C. It is also said that the British flag will shortly be hoisted in Fort Garry by Riel.<sup>1</sup> The mail went out as usual to-day.

*Wednesday, 23rd March, 1870*

The weather in the morning was gloomy and towards noon it began to snow and blow violently—it was not cold however and towards evening cleared up.

A French Half Breed was taken prisoner to-day for being drunk and disorderly in Fort Garry—five men were also confined for taking the part of the drunken man.

The committee on the constitution again sat for business.

Judge Black did not leave for Canada to-day on account of the storm. Capt. Bo[u]lton has decided upon leaving with Mr. Black but intends returning in the spring.

A great many ideas are afloat about Scott who was shot—some of the French declare he is not dead and some have taken and given bets on the subject—some have bet animals cows and oxen that he is not dead—it will be very strange if he turns up all right—but it is not likely.

Thos. Sinclair, Senr. Petty magistrate under the old H.B.C. rule died last evening at about half past five O'Clock after a long and severe illness<sup>2</sup>—his loss will be much felt—about half an hour before his death a man called at his house and insisted upon seeing him about a dispute—it was with difficulty that the man was prevented from seeing Mr. Sinclair although he knew he was dying.

Everything quiet in the settlement.

Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot and Alfred H. Scott delegates to Canada left to-day on their mission—the former [sic] in company with Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot.

*Thursday, 24th March, 1870*

The weather to-day was clear and pleasant.

Capt. Bo[u]lton and Judge Black left to-day for Canada—the latter is very well pleased with the terms of his mission to Ottawa.

The council again met to-day at One O'Clock for business—it is said they intend adjourning for a month to allow the committee to prepare their work.

<sup>1</sup> Not done until April 20.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Sinclair, 1810–1870, Magistrate and Councillor of Assiniboia, half-breed son of Chief Factor William Sinclair, and private freighter and trader of St. Andrew's.



McLeod the prisoner in Fort Garry has been set at liberty.

The want of the newspaper in the Settlement is felt very much—the public not being able to get any report of the proceedings in the council.<sup>1</sup> The mail came in to-day but was not a large one as was expected—there are evidently one or two mails lying over somewhere perhaps left in the woods on account of the inability of the carriers to get through.

Travellers to and from the States will have a hard time of it after this as the roads are likely to break up soon.

There being some trouble amongst the Indians at the lower end of the Settlement on account of their being under the impression that the French intended to attack them—Bishop Taché at the request of and in company with the Bishop of Rupert's Land went down to appease them and assure them that there was no such intention on the part of the French. The Bishop of Rupert's Land had tried to appease them but could not succeed.

The Canadians who left in company with Rev. Mr. Fletcher as well as the American Consul were detained some days at Pembina on account of the storm on the plains.

No word of the company resuming business again—but it is looked for by all parties anxiously.

*Friday, 25th March, 1870*

The weather this morning was warm and spring like and the snow showed the effects of the sun and is melting fast.

This morning the Provisional flag was found to have been cut down during the night from the flag pole in Fort Garry and was found lying on the ground. An attempt to hoist it again was unsuccessful as they could not climb the pole—there is therefore no flag flying in Fort Garry and not likely to be one for some time.

Some considerable discontent has lately been felt amongst the French at the conduct of Adjutant Lépine—and yesterday it broke out in open revolt—and some of the soldiers of Riel returned to their homes in consequence. Lépine himself left for his home—but to-day Riel sent a guard and brought him back to the fort—where he was reinstalled in Office with the understanding that he should not be so overbearing in his manner to the men. Lépine is not a favorite. Bishop Taché has not returned.

<sup>1</sup> No copy of the *New Nation* appeared between March 18 and April 2.

The Council sat again to-day but there is no report of its doings—the impression is that the Legislative body is uselessly losing a good deal of time and unless there are some immediate fruits from its labours confidence will wane in the minds of the people.

Dr. Schultz in company with young MacVicar and Monkman has been heard from in the neighbourhood of Islington House on the road to Fort Frances en route to Superior City.<sup>1</sup> The Dr. writes that he proposes returning to this country early in the spring via Fort Abercrombie.

The body of a young man named Smith was found frozen on the plains—and the shoes belt & other part of the clothing of another man was found—it is supposed that the latter is dead also—this occurred on the plains between here Fort Garry and Portage La Prairie.

*Saturday, 26th March, 1870*

The weather was very warm to-day and the snow was thawing rapidly already the bare ground is beginning to show itself in places and pools of water forming themselves here and there—the ice on the river is beginning to show signs of decay and has a good deal of water on it in places through which horses sink deeply.

The council again sat to-day no more word of its adjourning.

Bishop Taché returned from the lower settlement having succeeded in appeasing the Indians—he thinks there was some underhand influence bearing upon them.

It was only when Bishop Taché showed a document in his possession the copy of a despatch from the Canadian Government to McDougall when at Pembina denouncing that gentleman's conduct that the minds of some of the English settlers were disabused of the idea that Col. Dennis had authority for his actions when in the settlement.

It has come to light that McDougall before leaving Pembina wrote to Gov. MacTavish something as follows—

“The Queen's Proclamation may be out and it may not—If it is I am governor and you will obey my deputy left behind me. If it is not out you are still governor and responsible for the order and peace of the settlement” (cool).<sup>2</sup> It has also come to light that McDougall brought with him a magnificent throne manufactured by Jacques & Hay—it is

<sup>1</sup> Schultz and G. D. McVicar, guided by Joseph Monkman, made their way by dog team to Superior City and St. Paul which they reached on or before April 1; from thence Schultz and McVicar continued to Ontario, Monkman returning to Red River.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), McDougall to Mactavish, December 16, 1869.

said a finer article of furniture than the Throne in Ottawa—poor silly McDougall.

The mail went out as usual to-day.

A motion of condolence with the family of the late Mr. Sinclair has been passed by the Council and Thos. Sinclair Jnr. the son is to continue in the offices lately held by his father under the old H.B.C. Government.

*Sunday, 27th March, 1870*

The weather still warm and springlike—snow melting fast.

The usual services took place to-day.

No flag flies in Fort Garry as usual on this day.

It is said Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot has certain instructions entrusted to him in addition to the Bill of Rights which are not publicly known—amongst others a demand on the Canadian Government to reimburse the Hudson Bay Company for the losses sustained by that body in the late troubles—this is put in the way of expenses incurred by the present and late Provisional Government.<sup>1</sup>

Scott it is supposed will be a sort of go-between with Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot and Judge Black and it is quite certain he will invariably side with the former gentleman in all matters of dispute.

It is supposed that Scott is not buried inside the Fort walls—some think he was taken out by Isiore Lapraire and Isiore Goulait<sup>2</sup> dressed and sitting up between them in a sleigh as if alive and sunk at midnight in the river where the fishes will soon destroy the body. Others declare he is still alive.

Bishop Taché preached a very strong sermon at St. Boniface to-day in the course of which he denied being a mover in the present troubles and said it was with regret that he had seen his name made use of as an instigator of the troubles. He spoke very warmly on the late doings of the French and hoped they would show more charity in the future and try to become united with the English. His sermon told greatly on the people—indeed since his arrival affairs have quieted down and there is more confidence generally amongst the people.

<sup>1</sup> The only allusion in the *Journal* to what were in fact additions and changes made to the List of Rights of the Convention of Forty. The reference is to Article XIX of the Third List, the Amnesty Article.

<sup>2</sup> Elzéar Lagimonière; see note 2 on p. 246. Elzéar Goulet, 1836–1870, son of Alexis Goulet and Josette Siveright, studied under Father Lafêche and others; was at Pembina in 1859; an American citizen, the victim of “loyalist” violence in September, 1870.

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*Monday, 28th March, 1870*

The weather was very fine to-day warm and pleasant.

The council adjourned for a month to-day after having appointed the following committees.

One to go on with the constitution.

One to review the old laws of the late H.B.C. rule to add to or detract from them for the use of the Provisional Government.

One to consider the matter of the Hay privilege.<sup>1</sup>

Thes[e] Committees meet a week from to-day for business.

Bishop Taché visited the Fort to-day but it is not known on what business. It is supposed he is doing all in his power to bring about the restoration of the Company on a commercial basis.

The mail bag came in empty to-day.

Thos. Spence "ex governor"<sup>2</sup> of Manitoba has been asked to take hold of the New Nation—he has accepted at a salary of £40 per quarter he to pay the rent of the building out of that. Major Robinson however refuses to give up the keys of the printing office until all the bills connected with it are settled for.

*Tuesday, 29th March, 1870*

Weather fine and pleasant—warm sun shining brightly—snow disappearing fast.

Word was received from Dr. Schultz from two days travel to Superior City he expected to reach Ottawa about the 28th of this month. H. S. Donaldson and R. C. Burdick were taken prisoners to-day to Fort Garry for alleged complicity with Major Robinson in advising the latter [not?] to give up the New Nation. Major Robinson expecting to follow in the footsteps of his two friends wrote a letter to the American Government to be forwarded to Washington should he be locked up. Donaldson and Burdick were released this evening however and when Major Robinson was sent for he he [sic] refused to go and see O'Donohue. Some considerable grumbling exists amongst the settlers at the delay in reestablishing the Company and having civil law once more. Were the Company to go on with their business and civil law once more be

<sup>1</sup> P.A.M., Records of the Legislative Council of Assiniboia, records that council adjourned on March 26, 1870; as does the *New Nation*, April 8, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Begg is being ironic; this was Thomas Spence, late President of the Council of Manitoba. See note 2 on p. 284.



the order with a force of about 50 men to keep order, the affairs of the Settlement would progress more favourably and confidence would be greater amongst the people.

The Indians in and around the Indian Settlement are very much discontented and declare that if the French are not out of Fort Garry by the spring, they will attack them. Hy. Prince the chief is very bitter on the subject and told Bishop Taché during his Lordship's late visit that if an Indian stole an axe or an old blanket he was severely punished but that the French had been plundering wholesale all winter.

*Wednesday, 30th March, 1870*

Weather still continuing fine and pleasant—thawing the snow very fast—bare ground appearing in many places.

Early this morning word came that a band of Sioux were on their way from Portage La Prairie. A priest from the White Horse Plains arrived with the news his horse covered with foam.<sup>1</sup>

Riel sent word to the town-people to be on their guard.

Albert Sargent<sup>2</sup> went around about three or four O'Clock in the morning awakening people out of their beds—guns were got ready—& so forth but no Sioux came.

Several rumors were afloat about them and their numbers—some said they were coming down to clean out the American residents and others that they were starving and wanted help.

A report came later that the French at White Horse Plains had taken the band prisoners and would not allow them to proceed further—so ended this Sioux scare.

Ex Governor Spence has not yet got the keys of the printing office and no understanding has been arrived at between Major Robinson and the government.

The mail went out this morning early.

The Provisional flag was hoisted once more last evening and now floats in Fort Garry.

*Thursday, 31st March, 1870*

Weather still fine clear and pleasant very warm about noon.

<sup>1</sup> Probably the Reverend François-Xavier Kavanagh, 1829–1922, *curé* of St. François-Xavier, who came to Red River in 1866.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

The mail came in early this morning and was a very large one—four bags—all the back mails are now in.

Major Robinson was conducted to the Fort by a guard sent after him—and arrangements were completed with him to give up the keys of the New Nation Office. Major Robinson was then placed at liberty. Ex. Governor Spence then took possession and expects to have the paper out by Saturday.

It is rumored that instead of the Province of Assiniboia this is to be called the Province of Manitoba<sup>1</sup>—why the change is not known.

A correspondence is going on between Riel and Gov. MacTavish relative to the Hudson Bay Company resuming business again. How soon this will take place however is not yet known.

Jo. Rolette Senr.<sup>2</sup> arrived to-day from Pembina business unknown. A report was about that President Grant had addressed himself to the Canadian Government regarding the reports that Mr. McDougall had endeavoured to or had enlisted men on the American side of the line at Pembina.<sup>3</sup>

A French doctor named [Pillard] has been compelled to stop practicing [sic] by Riel on account of his being proved incompetent.<sup>4</sup>

*Friday, 1st April, 1870*

Weather still warm and pleasant. A great deal of water on the ice. Snow rapidly disappearing.

Jas. J. Hill<sup>5</sup> of the firm of Hill Griggs and Co in St. Paul arrived last evening on business connected with his firm.

It is supposed he will make some arrangements for bonding goods through to this country before he leaves the Settlement.

<sup>1</sup> The first mention of the change of name ; the next is that of Riel's directions to the Reverend N. J. Ritchot, A.A.S.B., Riel to Ritchot, April 19, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Rolette, Jr., 1820-1871, originally of Prairie du Chien ; trader with American Fur Company ; member of Territorial Legislature of Minnesota, 1853-1855, and of Territorial Council, 1856-1857 ; see note 1 on p. 165.

<sup>3</sup> Ulysses S. Grant, President of the United States, 1869-1877 ; the American Department of State was investigating the charges. See Introduction, p. 73.

<sup>4</sup> See Schmidt *Memoirs* No. xv below.

<sup>5</sup> James J. Hill, 1838-1916 ; Canadian-American ; freighter out of St. Paul ; later director of St. Paul, Minnesota and Manitoba Railway, of Canadian Pacific Railway, and founder and president of the Great Northern Railway.

The French are busy cleaning out the Fort—and have been at work for some days on the floating bridge over the Assiniboine.

It is reported that the Sioux Indians threatened the life of Mr. J. M. House<sup>1</sup> at White Horse Plains—and that they were not very well pleased at being turned back by the French.

A desperate fight took place in the saloon of Lennon and Cosgrove between H. F. O'Lone and Cosgrove against a Frenchman named Vermette<sup>2</sup>—the two former struck the latter with a sling shot or some other weapon and cut him badly—these rows will however be stopped shortly as we are to have policemen in the town.

Bishop Taché who has been on a visit to White Horse Plains returned to-day.

Jos. Rolette Senr. is in from Pembina. Capt. Gay who is still living at the Fort is making a gay appearance at times in the Settlement.

There are a good many rumors going about that the Indians are likely to prove troublesome in the Spring.

*Saturday, 2nd April, 1870*

Weather warmer to-day than it has been this spring. River beginning to look very shaky.

The New Nation under the management of ex governor Spence made its appearance again to-day—but advocating entirely different policy from the former issues under Robinson. Annexation is knocked on the head. The newspaper contained a letter from Riel to Gov. MacTavish setting forth the terms on which the Company was to resume business—and it is known amongst a few that these terms have been agreed to by Gov. MacTavish and it seems probable now that the H.B.C. will resume trade early in the week.<sup>3</sup>

The French have killed for consumption 51 cattle at Lane's Fort one of which was given to the Sioux. Word has been received that the Indians have robbed young McDougall<sup>4</sup> of his entire outfit on the Saskatchewan and killed three miners. McDougall is the son of the missionary of the

<sup>1</sup> Not identified.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified, but see note 3 on p. 271.

<sup>3</sup> *New Nation*, April 2, 1870. There are two issues numbered 11; that of March 18, and the above, of which the outer sheets are dated March 18, and the inner April 2; it is to the latter to which the *Journal* refers.

<sup>4</sup> John McDougall, 1842-1917, later missionary and author, son of the Reverend George Millward McDougall, 1821 (?) - 1876, Methodist missionary who came to the North-West in 1860.

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same name and is trading on his own and W. E. Sanford[']s of Hamilton account.

Business is beginning to revive and confidence becoming greater every day. Word is received that a Mr. Pether<sup>1</sup> a commissioner from Canada is making arrangements with the Indians between here & Lake Superior for the passage of Troops into this country in the spring. The Mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 3rd April, 1870*

Weather still continued fine and the ice on the river is beginning to look dangerous.

The usual services took place to-day.

Myles McDermott and Joe McDermott<sup>2</sup> arrived to-day from Pembina having with them the horses belonging to the H.B.C. at that place for which they had gone. The company have not enough fodder for their cattle at the Pembina Post for some time past and they were in danger of dying from starvation. The McDermotts therefore went and brought down as many horses as possible the oxen being given out to the neighbours at Pembina to winter.

Mr. J. J. Hill expects to be able to come to some arrangement about bonding for the goods next spring before he leaves the settlement. Four policemen are now stationed in the town.

Riel it is said ordered the French at White Horse Plains to give the Sioux Indians £60 Sterling of goods as a present when they sent them back lately to the Portage.

*Monday, 4th April, 1870*

The weather was fine to-day and snow continuing to disappear rapidly. The Committees on Constitution—Hay Privilege—and old H.B.C. code of laws—sat to-day for business and were in session all day. Bishop Taché has been at the Fort all afternoon.

Gov. MacTavish does not seem to improve in health and intends leaving the country early in the spring if he is strong enough to be removed. It is reported that "Shamon" a notorious French halfbreed a great friend of Dr. Schultz has arrived at the Portage in company with the Sioux Chief "Standing Buffalo" and a few warriors. Standing Buffalo

<sup>1</sup> R. Pither, with W. M. Simpson, was Canadian Commissioner to the tribes between Thunder Bay and Red River.

<sup>2</sup> Sons of Andrew McDermot.



is an Indian favorably inclined towards the whites and is not likely to give trouble. Shamon [had] better keep quiet else he will see the inside of Fort Garry.<sup>1</sup>

It is said the keys of the storehouses in Fort Garry are to be given up to-night or to-morrow morning and business resumed there.

The packet for the North is expected to leave to-morrow morning.

*Tuesday, 5th April, 1870*

The weather continues very fine and warm.

The keys of the Storehouses in Fort Garry have not yet been given up to the H.B.C. although the papers of agreement have been signed by Gov. MacTavish.

The packet for the North started this morning having a letter amongst others from Riel to the Missionaries in the North West—it was a circular letter to be read and handed around. The contents of the epistle is not known although it is supposed that it notifies the arrangement of the difficulty with the Company.<sup>2</sup>

The mail went out as usual.

The Plainhunters have started on their way to the settlement by this time and may be expected to arrive about the beginning of May.

The Committees sat again to-day on their regular business. Mr. James Ross stated while in his cups that he had played a double game of late all through and acted altogether according to the dictates of Riel in and at the time of the late conventions. Mr. Wm. Tait on hearing of this gave Mr. Ross a piece of his mind and said he had always heard him termed a rogue but now he had confirmation of it.

Mr. Charles House<sup>3</sup> has been down from the Portage complaining of annoyance from Indians. It is reported that a guard is to be sent up to protect property there.

Riel was up at the White Horse Plains to-day.

*Wednesday, 6th April, 1870*

The weather was very warm to-day and the river now looks and in fact is quite unsafe.

The keys of the Storehouses have not yet been given up to the H.B.C.—the Provisional Government are separating the goods confiscated of Schultz [sic] from those belonging to the H.B.C.

<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on p. 198.

<sup>2</sup> See No. xxv below.

<sup>3</sup> Charles House was first postmaster at Portage la Prairie.

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The Committees sat again to-day on their regular business.

Some Scotch people who have been wintering out with their cattle returned to-day to their homes.

Sad reports are heard of the havoc made on the Company's goods by those of the French in power. Lépine especially is said to have feathered his own nest.

Confidence is becoming more and more fixed every day although some fore[see] trouble ahead especially from the Indians.

A good many of the Americans are speaking of leaving the country as soon as possible.

Business is reviving a little.

The Committee on the Constitution are getting along slowly with their work.

*Thursday, 7th April, 1870*

Weather fine and very warm. River rising a good deal and the ice now quite impassable.

The Committees sat again to-day at One O'Clock p.m.

It was reported that the English flag was to be hoisted to-day at the Fort in place of the Provisional one and that the band was to play and a salute fired at the same time.

No word however of the keys of the storehouses being given up nor the English flag hoisted.

It is said Patrice Breland is to start to-morrow morning for the interior with despatches to the effect that arrangements had been completed with the H.B.C. for the carrying on of their business & that the settlement is in a state of peace. This is done to counteract any discontent there might be amongst the Indians and to prevent trouble from them this spring.<sup>1</sup>

Thos. Bunn the Secretary of State was so drunk to-day that he could hardly walk—he is losing caste fast.

A melancholy occurrence took place to-day in the sudden death of Mr. Chas. Flett.<sup>2</sup> It appears he had been drinking freely in company with Thos. Bunn and some others during the day. At last he became so drunk in the saloon of Lennon and Cosgrove that he had to be taken up stairs by Lennon when he shortly expired. It is supposed he died from suffocation. Dr. Bird was summoned and an inquest held on the body.

<sup>1</sup> See I. Cowie, *Company of Adventures*, p. 412.

<sup>2</sup> See *New Nation*, April 9, 1870.

Some of the Americans are getting more and more scared and are thinking of leaving the settlement soon.

The mail did not arrive to-day although word was received that five bags of mail matter was on the way from Pembina.

*Friday, 8th April, 1870*

The weather to-day was fine with a very warm wind—the river rising rapidly and the ice breaking up.

The keys of the Storehouses in Fort Garry were given up to the H.B.C. to-day and they are to resume business in the beginning of the week.

The New Nation came out again to-day.

The Council Committee sat again to-day on their business.

No Mail arrived to-day it is expected to be a large one and doubtless the bad state of the roads has delayed it.

No flag flying as yet at Fort Garry.

A man in attempting to cross the ice to-day fell through and lost some parcels he was carrying and came near being drowned himself. Capt. Gay still remains at Fort Garry and seems to have a hand in the Government but in what position is not known.

There was a report to-day that the Sioux Indians have shot twenty of the Plain hunters on their way into the Settlement—this is not believed however to be true.

Patrice Breland has left on his mission to the interior.

*Saturday, 9th April, 1870*

It blew very hard this morning—the wind being warm—at the same time it was cloudy—in the afternoon it blew from the North with a drizzling cold rain.

The river open in front of St. Boniface.

The mail came in this morning—the mail man in crossing got through the ice and both him and the bags had to be dragged ashore.

The Hudson Bay Company granted the first Bill of Exchange on London to-day since the time when their cash box was seized by Riel.

The Company are taking an inventory at present with closed doors and expect to resume business in the beginning of the week.

The Committees sat again to-day and adjourned for a week.

The Mail went out to-night as usual—the carrier expected to have some difficulty in crossing the river.

The following Proclamation was issued to-day in French and English.

## PROCLAMATION

To the People of the North West

Let the Assembly of twenty-eight Representatives which met on the 9th March be dear to the people of Red River ! That Assembly has shown itself worthy of great confidence. It has worked in union. The members devoted themselves to the public interests and yielded only to sentiments of good will duty and generosity. Thanks to that noble conduct public authority is now strong. That strength will be employed to sustain and protect the people of the country.

To-day the Government pardons all those whom political differences led astray only for a time. Amnesty will be generously accorded to all those who will submit to the Government, who will discountenance or inform against dangerous gatherings.

From this day forth the public highways are open.

The Hudson's Bay Company can now resume business. Themselves contributing to the public good, they circulate their money as of old. They pledge themselves to that course.

The attention of the Government is also directed very specially to the Northern part of the country, in order that trade there may not receive any serious check and peace in the Indian districts may thereby be all the more securely maintained.

The disastrous war which at one time threatened us, has left among us fears and various deplorable results. But let the people feel reassured.

Elevated by the Grace of Providence and the suffrages of my fellow citizens to the highest position in the Government of my country, I proclaim that peace reigns in our midst this day. The Government will take every precaution to prevent this peace from being disturbed.

While internally all is thus returning to order, externally also matters are looking favorable. Canada invites the Red River people to an amicable arrangement. She offers to guarantee us our rights and to give us a place in the Confederation equal to that of any other Province.

Identified with the Provisional Government, our national will based upon justice shall be respected.

Happy country to have escaped many misfortunes that were prepared for her ! In seeing her children on the point of a war, she recollects the old friendship which used to bind us and by the ties of the same patriotism she has reunited them again for the sake of preserving their lives, their liberties and their happiness.

Let us remain united and we shall be happy. With strength of unity we shall retain prosperity.

O my fellow-countrymen without distinction of language or without distinction of creed, keep my words in your hearts ! If ever the time should



unhappily come when another division should take place amongst us, such as foreigners heretofore sought to create, that will be the signal for all the disasters which we have had the happiness to avoid.

In order to prevent similar calamities, the Government will treat with all the severity of the law those who will dare again to compromise the public security. It is ready to act against the disorder of parties as well as against that of individuals. But let us hope rather that extreme measures will be unknown and that the lessons of the past will guide us in the future.

[Signed] LOUIS RIEL.

Government House Fort Garry

April 9th 1870<sup>1</sup>

The Mail was brought back again this evening and had to be detained till morning on account of the bad state of the river.

*Sunday, 10th April, 1870*

The weather was fine and pleasant to-day. The ice moved considerably during the night and open water was seen in several places in the morning. In the afternoon there was a grand Shove of the ice leaving the river quite open in the neighbourhood of St. Boniface and Point Douglas.

The water is high.

The usual services took place to-day.

Several bridges in the settlement have been injured from freshets but there seems to be no danger of a general flood.

*Monday, 11th April, 1870*

The weather to-day was very fine.

A report came down that the Sioux were again troublesome at the Portage and that they were threatening Mr. House and others—it is believed however that this story is exag[g]erated.

A man named Burr<sup>2</sup> at the Portage being reported as about to leave for British Columbia with the intention of defrauding his creditors, a guard was sent up to attach his property and he himself is to be brought down under arrest to answer the charges against him. Riel is unpacking Gov. McDougall's furniture for the use of the government house.

An address to the people was issued by Louis Schmidt Assistant Secretary

<sup>1</sup> The Proclamation was printed in English and French in the *New Nation*, April 15; the text in the *Journal* follows the English of the *New Nation*; the English text in E. H. Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 918-919, is a rougher translation.

<sup>2</sup> F. H. Burr, not otherwise identified.

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by order of the President—it was in French however and spoke peace.<sup>1</sup>

The Mail bag came in to-day empty. Capt. Gay was bringing the Proclamation and Schmidt's address to the several stores for circulation amongst the people—the gay Captain in endeavouring to make his horse jump a mud puddle succeeded in causing the horse to plunge him head long into the dirty water much to the astonishment of himself and the amusement of the bystanders.

Gov. MacTavish is improving somewhat in his health and is now able to walk about a little on the platform before the door and also to mount the stairs. The clerks in Fort Garry are still busy taking an inventory of the goods and the stores are not yet open for business.

*Tuesday, 12th April, 1870*

The weather was fine to-day and very warm. The river is now quite open and rose considerably to-day.

The Provisional flag is again flying at Fort Garry they having placed ladders against the pole and hoisted it in that way.

The correspondence concerning the North West affairs published by order of the Canadian Government has come to hand and have [sic] caused a good deal of indignation here at some of the statements contained therein.<sup>2</sup>

The mail went out as usual.

The Clerks are still busy taking an inventory in Fort Garry.

Gov. MacTavish has experienced a decided improvement in his health lately and now goes out for a little each day.

Everything remains quiet.

*Wednesday, 13th April, 1870*

Weather to-day was cloudy cold and raw. In the morning the river was quite free from ice but in the afternoon the Assiniboine ice came floating past in great quantities.

Modest Romain<sup>3</sup> a relation of Riel's was put in prison by the latter some

<sup>1</sup> This circular was printed in English in the *New Nation*, April 15; the text is in *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 337-340. See Schmidt's *Memoirs*, No. xv below, and No. xxv below.

<sup>2</sup> C.S.P., 1870 (12), *Correspondence and Papers Connected with Recent Occurrences in the North-West Territories* (Ottawa, 1870).

<sup>3</sup> Modest Lagimanière, dit Romain.

days ago for speaking disrespectfully to the President and is only to be released to-morrow his time being up.

The H.B.C. Stores at Fort Garry it is expected will be open for business in the beginning of next week.

Lane's Fort has been abandoned by Riel's men and is now once more in the hands of the H.B.C.

Everything remains very quiet in the Settlement.

The dam of Mr. John Inkster's Mill<sup>1</sup> broke away some days ago but is now about repaired so that the Mill will be able to work again in a few days.

The river is rising rapidly.

*Thursday, 14th April, 1870*

Weather to-day was bitter cold—blowing a strong sharp wind—the river rose still more to-day.

Word was brought down from the Portage to-day that the Sioux Indians there were fighting amongst themselves and had already killed one or two of their own number. The settlers in the vicinity were becoming alarmed for their safety—as these Indians have of late been threatening and propose moving their lodges away—this latter looks bad.

Riel has left for the White Horse Plains with a guard of six men and it is said he has gone up about these Sioux troubles.

F. H. Burr arrived under escort to-day at Fort Garry to be examined on the charge of intention to leave the country to defraud his creditors. Mr. Bannatyne being a creditor was sent for to go to the Fort to testify in this case.

No mail arrived to-day the roads being too bad.

George Emerling closed his hotel to-day on the plea that it did not pay him—his boarders were put out a good deal by this sudden resolution on his part.

*Friday, 15th April, 1870*

The weather to-day was very stormy—blowing drifting and snowing—a regular winter day and very cold.

This being Good Friday most of the stores were closed and business suspended.

The mail came in but it was not a large one.

<sup>1</sup> John Inkster, ?-1870; free trader and miller of Seven Oaks in St. John's, and Councillor of Assiniboia.

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The New Nation came out to-day. Settlement quiet.

Hudson Bay Company have not opened their stores yet not having finished the inventory of their stock.

Gov. MacTavish still improving.

F. H. Burr started again for the Portage under guard to produce his books—he denies any intention of leaving the country to defraud his creditors. He is to be brought back for further examination.

*Saturday, 16th April, 1870*

The weather to-day unlike yesterday was fine bright and warm—the late fall of snow rapidly disappeared under the influence of the sun's rays. It is reported that a box containing correspondence to and from Mr. McDougall has been discovered amongst his effects by Riel and that all the letters are to be published in the New Nation—they are expected to turn out racy in the extreme.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

River still rising a little.

It is strange to note how men who kept shady during the late troubles now come forward to claim their reward from the Canadian Government.

The mail went out as usual.

They say Riel's quarters are magnificent with McDougall's furniture.

*Sunday, 17th April, 1870*

Weather fine warm and pleasant.

Not much change in the river.

The usual services took place to-day.

It is said that Alfred H. Scott the delegate took with him about forty picked Marten from the Company's Stores—this is nothing but a robbery.<sup>2</sup> It is also said that the same Scott gave H. F. O'Lone orders (for advances) on Wm. O'Donohue before he left which were refused acceptance by that gentleman a day or two since—Scott has evidently gone in to make money.

Everything quiet.

Gov. MacTavish still improving.

<sup>1</sup> Presumably it was from this source that Charles Mair's letter of July 15, 1869, to William McDougall, published in the *New Nation*, April 22, was obtained. Begg makes no comment upon it.

<sup>2</sup> It was reported in St. Paul that Scott had H.B.C. furs to sell: M.H.S., Ramsey Papers, J. A. Wheelock to Ramsey, April 7, 1870. If this were so, Begg's comment is probably justified.



*Monday, 18th April, 1870*

Weather very pleasant & warm without being too much so.

No apparent change in the river to-day.

A number of the soldiers of the Provisional Government were paid off to-day and it is said that the most of them refused to re-enlist. A good deal of drunkenness was going on to-day in the Fort and the town.

Money is a little more plentiful.

F. H. Burr was brought down again to-day and it is now said that his neighbours declare as far as they know that he had no intention of leaving the country.

No mail arrived to-day.

The letters seized belonging to Mr. McDougall are being published in the New Nation—which comes out next Friday.

Little excitement existing except in the way of liquor.

Riel does not appear to be gaining in popularity—his putting on so much style as he is now doing does not tend to increase him in favor even with his own people. He could not rule very long here.

Spence "editor of New Nation" is sending out two men to a point on the Lake of the Woods to locate a place which is likely to be of importance in the route from Lake Superior. It appears that the spot in question was looked on by Dr. Schultz with greedy eyes on which to pounce and speculate when the Canadian Government should come in.

*Tuesday, 19th April, 1870*

Weather to-day was beautifully fine warm and pleasant.

The river rose perceptibly today.

A great many are talking of leaving the country this spring especially amongst the ladies.

It is reported that some plotting is going on amongst some of the Canadians in town—it appears that two of them were allowed to use Dr. Schultz brick house to live in and that the number has increased to about a dozen and that some plot is going on amongst them. Mrs. Schultz is supposed to be concerned in it—and it is very probable that she and four of the Canadians will be put across the lines.

H. F. O'Lone received an account only the other day from Dr. Schultz not dated anywhere and this has given rise to the idea that the Dr. is still hovering about the outskirts of the settlement.

A good deal of drinking is going on in town amongst the French.

## 360 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

The mail bag came in empty this morning—roads being almost impassable between here and Fort Abercrombie.

The mail went out as usual.

*Wednesday, 20th April, 1870*

Wednesday to-day was beautiful and warm.

River still rising.

Riel gave orders to have the " Union Jack " hoisted at the Fort. And when it was done O'Donohue had it taken down which when Riel found out he came out and said that when he gave orders he wished them obeyed—and further that if O'Donohue was working for selfish ends or Annexation to the States he might go where he could get them—and that he deserved to go to jail—if anyone wanted the Provisional flag hoisted it could be done so under the British one as under the protection of it. Riel then hoisted or rather ordered to be hoisted the Union Jack. O'Donohue and some of his followers threatened to leave on account of this but it appears thought better of it.

Riel reminded O'Donohue that he had sworn himself as a British subject.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Taché was nearly the whole day in the Fort and it is thought that his influence is doing a great deal of good.

No more word of the Canadiens to be sent out of the settlement. Committees sat to-day at Fort Garry.

*Thursday, 21st April, 1870*

Weather in the morning was cold and raw with rain—it cleared up towards noon and grew warmer—a warm shower fell in the afternoon and it cleared up altogether afterwards.

Mail bags came in empty to-day with a note from Cavalier at Pembina stating that the roads were very bad between there & Abercrombie and that there was great chances [sic] for a freshet.

Some considerable excitement was felt amongst people at the difficulty about the Union Jack and Riel rose fifty percent in the estimation of most people for the stand he took. It is said Capt. Gay wrote out a

<sup>1</sup> This whole episode is significant, indicating as it did Riel's resolve to rely no more on the support of American sympathizers, such as O'Donoghue.

When O'Donoghue took oath as a British subject is not known ; presumably to qualify for election to the Legislative Council and when taking office in the Provisional Government.

challenge to fight O'Donohue but Riel would not let him send it. Capt. Gay said O'Donohue ought to have been hanged at once.

This afternoon a party of men came from the Fort and dug out the flag staff opposite Dr. Schultz' house and then carried it away to the Fort. It is said they intend hoisting the Provisional flag on it in front of the Government (Dr. Cowan's) house under the protection of the Union Jack. It is said that J. C. Kennedy is making a seal for the Provisional Government.

It being reported that the Indians in the Lower Settlement are troublesome, Riel has sent a guard with interpreters to pacify them and look into the matter.

The Committees were sitting at the Fort to-day.

*Friday, 22nd April, 1870*

Weather very warm and beautiful.

The Union Jack is still flying at the Fort—and the Schultz' flag staff is not yet put up.

The Committees were again sitting to-day on their work—in preparation for the sitting of the council.

The New Nation came out to-day and is the most creditable sheet yet issued of that paper.

The river still continues to rise.

Capt. Webb<sup>1</sup> and Colin Hamilton started for Portage La Prairie this morning to settle up their surveying business and pay off all demands on them.

Capt. Webb has all along acted in a common sense manner regarding the troubles in this country.

Everything is quiet in the settlement.

The Hudson Bay Company has not yet opened their stores for business—it is said that Riel has made a demand on the Company for all the wheat in their stores.

*Saturday, 23rd April, 1870*

Weather fine—although the wind which was high all day grew chilly towards evening.

<sup>1</sup> Captain A. C. Webb, P.L.S., of Brighton, Ontario, in charge of one of Dennis's two survey parties, that which was stopped in St. Vital on October 11, 1869. Webb took no part in the troubles of the winter. Colin Hamilton was presumably C. M. Hamilton, flagman of Webb's party.

The Committees again sat to-day for business.

The Schooner "Jessie McKenney" belonging to Henry McKenney came up the river from the Stone Fort and made fast opposite the town—it is said Mr. McKenney means to send her up as far as Pembina—she has on board the Saw Mill machinery Mr. McKenney had out on Lake Winnipeg.

Schultz is said to be still hovering around the settlement not a hundred miles from Fort Garry.

The Schultz' flag pole was erected in Fort Garry this afternoon and the Provisional Flag hoisted upon it.

The Union Jack and Provisional flag are both floating in Fort Garry but the Schultz pole with the Provisional flag on it is somewhat higher than the old Fort Garry flag staff.

The River rose again a little to-day but not much.

The mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 24th April, 1870*

Weather fine—warm and pleasant.

The river rose again to-day.

The usual services took place to-day and Bishop Taché preached in English in the R.C. School house in the town.

The Provisional flag was flying on the Schultz pole but the Union Jack was down—it appears that the rope of the post in the middle of the Fort was cut by some one unknown last night and it was found impossible this morning to hoist the Union Jack. Riel was furious it is said but others say it is a made up thing between him & O'Donohue as there was not [sic] attempt to find out the perpetrator of the outrage.

Ex Governor Marshall and some others with Beautinon as guide arrived from St. Paul to-day.<sup>1</sup> It is said they are here on affairs connected with the Northern Pacific Railroad.

*Monday, 25th April, 1870*

Weather beautifully warm and pleasant.

The Union Jack not yet flying—the Provisional flag however is in its place.

<sup>1</sup> William Rainey Marshall, Governor of Minnesota, 1866–1870, and founder of *St. Paul Daily Press*; Marshall was acting for Jay Cooke, Philadelphia banker, who had just taken over direction of the Northern Pacific Railway. In Marshall's party also was his brother-in-law, N. P. Langford. See No. xxiv. The mission was concerned with politics as well as railways. See Introduction, p. 128.



The guard sent down the settlement to look after the Indians in that direction it is said did not receive a very friendly reception from the savages.

A report went the rounds to-day that a body of American soldiers were on their way to and quite near Pembina to guard the American frontier.<sup>1</sup> At the same time it was rumored that about 400 filibusters were also on their way to this country—but it is likely that the fact of there being emigrants on the road to settle at St. Jo. has been construed into a filibustering expedition.

The Committees sat for the last time preparatory to the sitting of Council—which commences to-morrow.

Dr. Schultz has been heard from as having reached St. Paul—after a hard trip.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Bowen [sic] it is believed is still somewhere in the interior.<sup>3</sup>

*Tuesday, 26th April, 1870*

Weather warm and pleasant with a high warm wind in the afternoon. River still rising and the creeks now almost impassible.

The Parliament of Red River sat to-day for the first time in its second session.<sup>4</sup> Riel it is said is to have the Union Jack up again immediately—and it was said he intended to dismiss from the Fort those who were suspected of cutting the rope.

Ex Governor Marshall and his party have visited the settlement in connection with the Northern Pacific Railroad and it is purposed to run a road to Pembina immediately.

George Emerling and H. S. Donaldson returned this evening from St. Jo. where they have been marking out land for speculation purposes.

One strange reason that was reported about amongst a few for the non-appearance of the Mails is that they have been taken and burned at the Fort.

The steamer International is expected to run shortly.<sup>5</sup>

*Wednesday, 27th April, 1870*

Weather warm and pleasant—windy.

<sup>1</sup> A detachment of American troops reached Pembina on May 17, under the command of Colonel L. Wheaton.

<sup>2</sup> Schultz reached St. Paul on April 1.

<sup>3</sup> The whereabouts of Bown after his sojourn at the Eagle's Nest has not been discovered.

<sup>4</sup> P.A.M., Records of the Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia, p. 252.

<sup>5</sup> The vessel belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company, built in 1861.

River keeping about the same.

The pilot "La Roque"<sup>1</sup> of the steamer International has arrived from the States and reports 5 Bags of Mail matter lying at Georgetown unable to get through.

Parliament sat for the second time to-day this session.

Indian scares now are the order of the day.

No further word of the filibusters.

The Union Jack is to be hoisted again as soon as the rope can be fixed it would have been up to-day it is said had the weather been more favorable.

A good deal of anxiety is felt amongst all classes to hear news from our delegates.

A special messenger is to be despatched with letters to-morrow and to bring back word, if any at St. Paul, from our delegates.

*Thursday, 28th April, 1870*

Weather warm and pleasant—river seemed to have lowered a little to-day.

The Union Jack was again hoisted this morning. The Provisional flag was floating.

Isiore Goulait has been discharged by Riel, a good riddance.

It is not [now?] reported by La Rocque the pilot that there are eight bags lying in Georgetown.

The Parliament again sat to-day.

Capt. Gay is now in command at the Fort.

No Mail bags came in to-day.

The Company's stores are now open for business.

The Steamer International is expected to run early in the week.

Gov. MacTavish is still improving in health.

*Friday, 29th April, 1870*

Weather fine warm and pleasant.

River falling.

Parliament again sat to-day.

Riel it appears is averse to James Ross being on the Executive Council and proposed Mr. Bannatyne in his place.

A large mail came in this morning but there are still others overdue and not to hand.

Gov. Marshall and his party have left on their return home.

<sup>1</sup> Tom Laroque, Red River pilot.

Capt. Webb and Mr. Hart<sup>1</sup> left to-day for Canada.

Union Jack and Provisional flag are both flying to-day in Fort Garry. A shawl having been hoisted on the flag pole in front of Mr. Begg's house by Mrs. Begg in fun a man was sent up from Fort Garry on horseback to see what it was.

It is reported that Smallpox has been bad amongst the Indians on the plains and that there is danger of it being brought into the settlement by the robes. Some action it is said is to be taken by the government to prevent this.

*Saturday, 30th April, 1870*

Weather very warm for this season of the year.

The Parliament sat again to-day.

The "New Nation" came out to-day.

A report was current to-day that the body of a man was found floating in the river but it was not known who it was—some conjectured it might be the body of Scott who was shot at Fort Garry this winter.

It is said that some of the Canadians who have left the settlement took with them some of the blood of Scott on their handkerchiefs and the son of Rev. Geo. Young put some of it up in vials and is reported to have shown it publicly in the cars on his way to Canada.<sup>2</sup>

The Mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 1st May, 1870*

Weather exceedingly warm to-day with an oppressive wind—hot and sultry—towards evening it rained.

The usual services took place to-day.

Union Jack and Provisional flag both flying—the former is not taken down at night the halyards being made fast half way up the pole.

Everything quiet in the Settlement.

Gov. MacTavish is so far recovered that there is some talk of his leaving by the first or second boat. Dr. Cowan goes with him and J. H. MacTavish is spoken of as likely to take charge of Fort Garry until the new governor of the Hudson Bay Company arrives.

<sup>1</sup> Milner Hart, P.L.S., in charge of the second of Dennis's survey parties; he too had avoided involvement in the troubles.

<sup>2</sup> No corroboration of this rumour has been found.

## 366 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

*Monday, 2nd May, 1870*

Weather very warm and sultry indeed oppressive for this season of the year.  
The Parliament sitting again to-day.

No mail arrived to-day.

A report was abroad to-day that Shamon at the head of five hundred Sioux Indians were on their way to the Settlement but this is not believed.  
The "International" H.B.C. steamer is expected to arrive from her winter quarters any hour.

The H.B. Company are preparing to issue new notes for one pound Sterling each—both the paper and printing of these bills are not very creditable.

*Tuesday, 3rd May, 1870*

Weather warm and pleasant.

The mail arrived to-day bringing exciting news from Canada regarding Scott's execution here. Dr. Schultz and Mair seem to be doing their best to create excitement in Canada.

Parliament sat again to-day.

Steamer International not yet arrived. Some families chiefly of pensioners are reported to be leaving for across the lines on account of the news from Canada lest Riel should press them into his service.

The Governor is still improving and is expected to leave by the second boat.

The Company have issued their new bills which are as follows—

No...

No...

### ONE POUND STERLING

On demand I promise to pay the Bearer at Fort Garry the Sum of One Pound Sterling in a Bill of Exchange on the Hudson's Bay Company London.

Dated at Fort Garry, this— day of ——— 187—

[Signed] J. H. McTAVISH  
for Hudson Bay Company.

*Wednesday, 4th May, 1870*

Weather in the morning raining heavily but cleared up early and afterwards turned out a fine day.

A "Monster Lottery" at the stores of Bannatyne & Begg commenced to-day at which a large number of people attended.

The Steamer International arrived to-day at Fort Garry from her



winter quarters and leaves to-morrow morning for Georgetown taking with her a large quantity of furs on account of Hudson Bay Company. She is to return immediately for the purpose of taking Governor MacTavish away.

The captain of the steamer arrived by canoe to-day bringing with him two telegraphs from Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot the latest being dated 23rd April in which he says that he is under no personal danger and that the government is likely to give them a hearing soon. *telegrams*<sup>1</sup>

The Settlement remains quiet and no disturbance has occurred at the news of the excitement in Canada.

*Thursday, 5th May, 1870*

Weather turned out fine and bright to-day.

They commenced early loading up the International with furs and by 10 O'Clock all the bales were on board.

Mr. H. McKenney at the last moment put on board quite a large quantity of goods for Pembina at which place he is starting a saw mill and store. He Mr. McKenney went to Pembina on the steamboat. The Steamboat left about eleven O'Clock and had on board Mrs. Burdick and family, Mrs. Begg and infant and Mr. Colin Hamilton. It was reported that Riel intended to detain the steamboat but he did not. Father Lestang left on the steamboat for some point between here and Pembina.

Parliament sat again to-day.

No mail arrived to-day.

*Friday, 6th May, 1870*

Weather fine and pleasant but turned into rain and stormed very hard towards night blowing a perfect gale.

The Mail arrived this morning bringing much more moderate news from Canada.

Parliament sat again to-day.

Everything quiet in the settlement no more word of trouble from Indians.

The winterers are arriving every day but are not yet going about much.

The Steamer International towed Mr. McKenney's Schooner to Pembina where she will load with lumber and return.

Troops are expected every day at Pembina.

The New Nation came out to-day.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal correction.

## 368 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

*Saturday, 7th May, 1870*

Weather showery alternate fine and rainy.

Some Canadians have been holding meetings and talking a good deal until they attracted the attention of Riel who sent some men to surprise them. The consequence was that Hyman—Miller—Mercer and Archibald<sup>1</sup> left suddenly to cross the lines.

It was reported that a party of men were sent to intercept them but this is not believed.

The Hudson Bay Company are issuing Five shilling notes now.

Parliament sat again to-day.

The winterers report no word of the Small Pox where they were.

The mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 8th May, 1870*

Weather pleasant rather cool but not rainy.

The usual services took place to-day.

Riel attended St. Boniface Cathedral attended by a guard of ten men. Everything remains quiet in the settlement although Canadians are beginning to express fears of arrest & so forth.

It is thought by some that this country may not be given over to the Canadian government but may be erected into a crown colony.

It was reported to-day that Lépine had jumped over the counter of the H.B.C. store in Fort Garry and seized all the gold in the cash box on Saturday (yesterday) this proved false.

*Monday, 9th May, 1870*

The weather to-day was raw and chilly—with occasional rain—it however cleared up towards evening.

Canadians are beginning to feel more and more insecure from the report that Riel meant to keep them all as hostages.

It is not true that a guard was sent after Hyman and the others—but Canadians are keeping out of the way although as far as can be known they are perfectly safe.

The Hudson Bay Company are going to issue Five Pound Notes. Mr. J. H. McTavish the accountant at Fort Garry has been created Chief Trader and will be in charge of Fort Garry as soon as Mr. MacTavish, the governor, leaves—which will be by the next boat.

The Parliament sat for the last time this session and will not meet again

<sup>1</sup> All these men were prisoners of December 7.

until called for urgent business by the President.<sup>1</sup> The Country now is free from martial law<sup>2</sup> and the laws are to be printed on Wednesday in book form and distributed.

The mail bag arrived empty to-day.

The police force have been active to-day in arresting drunken and quarrelsome people—a great many cases came under their notice.

Soldiers for Pembina are on their way there in flat boats.

*Tuesday, 10th May, 1870*

The weather to-day was warmer and more pleasant than yesterday. A gentleman and his wife by the name of [Davis]<sup>3</sup> arrived to-day he says he hails from Sherbrooke, Canada East.

No more word of anything being done to Canadians residing here. It is very noticeable that there is no boasting nor riding over others shown by the French since peace reigned.

The winterers continue to arrive some of them however have gone by St. Jo—no more word of the Smallpox on the plains.

The mail went out as usual this evening.

*Wednesday, 11th May, 1870*

Weather fine and pleasant.

A good many mosquitoes are beginning to show themselves.

Winterers still arriving and bring confirmation of Dauphinais—George Fisher—Louis Morin and Pierre Walleth having taken their furs by way of St. Jo.<sup>4</sup>—and also that old Laframboise is not expected to live his sons are staying with him and it is doubtful whether they will bring in their father alive.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Neither Begg nor the *New Nation* mention the reading of the revised Bill of Rights reported by H. M. Robinson, U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, May 10, 1870, No. 35.

<sup>2</sup> The existence of martial law, never formally proclaimed, from December 8 to May 9, has, of course, an important bearing on the shooting of Thomas Scott.

<sup>3</sup> *New Nation*, May 13, 1870; this was probably R. A. Davis, later proprietor of Emmerling's Hotel (Davis House), and Premier of Manitoba, 1874–1878.

<sup>4</sup> These traders cannot be positively identified. Dauphinais was presumably a son of François Dauphinais (see note 2 on p. 166); George Fisher a son of George Fisher, of Prairie du Chien; Louis Morin was a *métis* of Sainte Agathe; of Pierre Ouellet nothing is known for certain.

<sup>5</sup> Probably that François Laframboise who in 1863 was interpreter in charge of Fort Laframboise on the Missouri, about eight miles above Pierre, for Laberge and Co.; later principal interpreter at Fort Rice and in negotiation with the Sioux in 1868.

## 370 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

It is said that some of the principal men amongst the French such as Lépine and O'Donohue are collecting all the gold they can lay their hands on—this looks suspicious that they are going to clear out.

Preparations for building are going on and the Settlement continues in a state of peace.

It now appears that Riel stopped the steamboat for some time on Thursday the 5th inst. and spoke something about such a large quantity of furs leaving at one time. It is feared that Riel will endeavour to detain Mr. MacTavish from going by the next boat.

*Thursday, 12th May, 1870*

Weather very warm and sultry.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day. People are anxiously looking forward to news from Canada.

Capt. Gay who is in command at Fort Garry now issues his passwords regularly and no one can get in or out of the Fort after nine O'Clock p.m. without the password.

The Capt. is drilling the men and it is said is very anxious to get uniforms for the men but is not able so he says to get the cash to purchase them with. The Executive council are supposed to meet every Thursday to see if anything of importance turns up.

Some anxiety is felt amongst the friends of Mr. MacTavish lest Riel will not allow him to leave by the next boat—but it is not likely that there will be any trouble.

Winterers still arriving.

The Mail came in late this evening but brought no news of importance except that the popular excitement in Canada is cooling down considerably.

*Friday, 13th May, 1870*

The weather still continues very warm.

Bishop Taché received a telegram from Rev. Mr. Ri[t]chot in which he says that the case against him and Mr. Scott has been abandoned and that they are in no personal danger.<sup>1</sup> He however is reticent on matters concerning his mission.

A number of men have been despatched by Riel to Pembina to act there as a guard for some reason or another. It appears there are a number of strangers arriving in the settlement and they disappear somewhere or

<sup>1</sup> Ritchot and Scott had been arrested in Ottawa, April 11, on a charge laid by Hugh Scott, brother of Thomas, of complicity in the murder of the latter.



another and their business here is not exactly known. One man it is said came into the settlement having a large number of letters with him and passed round in the direction of the Stone Fort.

It is now reported that the Imperial Government is going to take hold of this country and arrange matters before anything further is done with Canada—the latter in the meantime is not to have anything to do with it—and that the man in charge of the troops coming in is to be a temporary lieut. governor.<sup>1</sup>

Everything remains quiet in the settlement.

The man Davis and his wife have left Emmerling's hotel but it is not known where he has gone.

*Saturday, 14th May, 1870*<sup>2</sup>

Weather fine and pleasant.

Winterers still arriving and no word of the Small pox.

The Settlement remains quiet and peaceable.

The Steamer International is expected hourly. Governor MacTavish is going away in her.

The mail went out as usual.

Rev. Father Lestanc is about departing on a mission to visit the Indian tribes and keep them quiet.

The New Nation came out to-day.

*Sunday, 15th May, 1870*

Weather cold and raw.

Usual services took place to-day.

Steamer International arrived this afternoon.

Nothing of importance going on.

*Monday, 16th May, 1870*

Weather somewhat cold in the morning but warmer later in the day.

Governor MacTavish paid a visit to Riel before leaving and it is now thought there will be no trouble about his leaving.

The Governor is busily engaged in packing up.

<sup>1</sup> This was indeed considered : see Arthur, *Letters of Lord and Lady Wolseley*, p. 2, Wolseley to Lady Wolseley, April 25 and 27, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> The date of the Protestation, May 14 ; see No. xxvi below. Begg makes no mention of it ; neither does the *New Nation*.

A meeting of the winterers is called for to-morrow when Riel is to address them.

It is reported that some Canadians have left the settlement to join the troops coming in.

The mail came in as usual bringing still more peaceable news but the expedition for this country seems to be going on.

The Sutherlands are putting up a building next to W. H. Lyons.

There is no appearance of the grasshoppers coming yet.

*Tuesday, 17th May, 1870*

Weather turned out pleasant in the morning but afterwards changed for the worse.

The International left about noon. Mrs. A. G. B. Bannatyne, Lizzie Bannatyne and Willie Bannatyne started with Governor and Mrs. MacTavish and children. All were on board and the steamer was only waiting for the old governor when he appeared driving out of the Fort Gate in company with Mr. J. H. McTavish—they drove to the top of the bank and there the Governor alighted and walked slowly without any other assistance than his cane down to the boat. Mr. A. McDermott joined him half way down the hill and it was observed that the Governor although appearing very weak still seemed to be reminding his father-in-law of minor matters in business—they being judged minor from the actions of the two men. After the Governor got on board the gangways were shortly taken on board. At this time it began to rain a thin penetrating rain—with a strong wind and this latter gave the steamer some difficulty in getting away from her moorings.

The mail left as usual.

This night a most terrific storm arose of thunder lightning and rain.

The meeting of the winterers was held at Fort Garry to-day and Riel addressed them but it is said they received his speech rather coolly.<sup>1</sup>

*Wednesday, 18th May, 1870*

The weather this morning unlike last night was fine clear and bright.

It is reported that Riel offered the winterers wheat but that only a very few would accept it.

The Provisional flag was hoisted to-day and taken down about ten O'Clock in the morning.

<sup>1</sup> The *New Nation*, May 20, reported them well satisfied with Riel's address.

The Union Jack is still flying.

The winterers are beginning to enjoy themselves.

Old Laframboise one of our oldest and finest plain hunters and winterers died at the Portage on his way into the Settlement.

Some of the heavy cannon were fired off at Fort Garry this evening but for what purpose is not known. They are clearing out one of the bastions at Fort Garry to serve as a jail—the old one is unfit for use.

Everything quiet in the Settlement.

*Thursday, 19th May, 1870*

The weather was fine and pleasant to-day turning out cold however in the evening.

The Provisional flag is still down and the Union Jack floats at Fort Garry. Everything remains quiet.

A few of our winterers have left their furs at St. Jo and have come up to the settlement themselves—word came in to-day that the American authorities were going to seize all the robes and furs that crossed the line on account of the report about Small pox. Our winterers are therefore going to bring up their robes here.

The mail came in this evening and brought news of the New North West Bill being introduced into the House of Commons by Sir John A. McDonald [sic]<sup>1</sup>—also that the expedition to this country was going on in Canada—later news via St. Paul however brought word of a telegram from London Eng. stating that the expedition had been stopped by the Imperial Government.

Everything quiet in the Settlement.

*Friday, 20th May, 1870*

The weather was fine to-day but a little raw.

Nothing of importance going on in the Settlement.

The New Nation came out this evening.

It appears W. B. O'Donohue thinks it too conciliatory in its tone. Spence the editor received from Riel a fire and lightning article to insert in the paper which he Spence refused to do and applied to Bishop Taché on the subject. His Lordship fixed it all right. Preparations are being made by several parties to put up a number of buildings as soon as they are assured that things will be quiet. The old laws of the Settlement ceased to exist to-day and the new ones are in force from to-day.

<sup>1</sup> The Manitoba Bill, introduced May 2, 1870.

## 374 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

The artillery were out to-day under Capt. Gay but it is said their practice was very poor at short range too.

*Saturday, 21st May, 1870*

The weather was fine to-day.

The Provisional flag was hoisted to-day the cause of its being down was that the rope had broken and there was some difficulty in getting it hoisted.

The Union Jack still floats.

The Hudson Bay Company are issuing Ten Pound Sterling Bills—this is done to save labour and trouble.

There have been several fights in the town caused by liquor but the police are active and have made a number of arrests.

Taking it altogether the Settlement has been more quiet this season than it ever was before in the shape of drinking & fighting.

The mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 22nd May, 1870*

The weather to-day turned out very bad—raining heavily all day.

Wm. Drever, H. F. O'Lone and H. McKenney arrived from Pembina to-day. They report that the military post is not to be at Pembina—and that no fort is to be built there—100 U.S. soldiers are there now stationed in tents.

They further report that the Bill of Rights has been all granted with the exception of one clause—and that Father Ri[t]chot is expected to arrive in the Settlement soon.

Another report is that the Fenians attacked a body of Canadian volunteers who were on their way to Red River.

Enos Stutsman at Pembina is appointed Government Land Agent in Dakotah.

The usual services took place to-day—Bishop Taché preached in English in the little chapel of the Sisters on this side of the river.

*Monday, 23rd May, 1870*

Weather turned out fine but towards evening it appeared rather threatening.

A council was held to-day at White Horse Plains at which Riel O'Donohue and the French Councillors attended and it is said a great



many winterers were there—what was done at the meeting has not been learned.<sup>1</sup>

The mail came in to-day and brought the news that the Expedition from Canada is still going on and that the Manitoba Bill was passed & the Dominion Parliament prorogued.

Sir John A. McDonald [sic] was dangerously ill—at latest accounts however he was out of danger.<sup>2</sup>

Father Ri[t]chot is expected to arrive in the settlement some time this week.

*Tuesday, 24th May, 1870*

To-day turned out fine and bright.

A large number of people assembled to celebrate the Queen's birthday.<sup>3</sup> Races were run about three miles from town and general good feeling existed.

A large new Provisional flag was hoisted to-day.

Some of the Stores were closed.

The mail went out as usual.

In the evening a grand concert on behalf of the orphans was given in the old Court House.

A big row occurred in the evening at the saloon of Lennon & Cosgrove also another at the house of Hy. Coutu the butcher.

No other disturbance happened during the day.

A bad feeling is beginning to exist in the minds of the French with regard to the Canadian Volunteers coming to this country. It is to be hoped however there is to be no more trouble in the settlement.

*Wednesday, 25th May, 1870*

To-day the weather was fine and bright.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

Capt. Gay takes his men out on horseback to practice shooting at marks while at full gallop.<sup>4</sup>

Some of them prove themselves very good shots.

Scouts are being sent out in different directions for purposes unknown to the public.

<sup>1</sup> The *New Nation* carries no report of this meeting.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John fell ill on May 4 and was incapacitated for the rest of the summer of 1870.

<sup>3</sup> May 24, the Queen's Birthday, was the traditional Canadian holiday, observed with the same spirit in Red River on both banks of the Red.

<sup>4</sup> The gallant captain had discovered the natural aptitude of his men.

## 376 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

*Thursday, 26th May, 1870*

Weather still continues fine.

Mail came in to-day.

Fenian alarms heavy.

A good deal of talk in the settlement about Hildebrand the outlaw coming.<sup>1</sup> The expedition for this country still going on.

*Friday, 27th May, 1870*

Weather still fine and pleasant.

No word of Father Ri[t]chot and the other delegates although they are partly expected with the boat.

A good deal of feeling exists amongst the French against volunteers coming here but it is not thought that it will result in anything bad.

*Saturday, 28th May, 1870*

Weather fine and pleasant.

The mail went out as usual.

The Steamer International arrived this afternoon having Mr. Freeman, Mr. F. E. Kews agent on board.<sup>2</sup>

Governor MacTavish had reached Georgetown in safety.

Father Ri[t]chot nor any of the delegates were not on board.

*Sunday, 29th May, 1870*

Weather very warm and pleasant.

The usual services took place to-day.

Everything quiet.

*Monday, 30th May, 1870*

Weather very warm and sultry.

A storm threatened towards evening.

The mail came in early.

Bishop Taché had a letter from Father Ri[t]chot in which he says that everything is granted—and speaks hopefully of the future.<sup>3</sup>

The feeling in the Fort is cooling down considerably and there is little doubt but that everything will go right.

<sup>1</sup> This man has not been identified.

<sup>2</sup> John Freeman, of London, England, agent of F. E. Kew, London exporter and later London member of the firm of Kew, Stobart and Eden of Winnipeg.

<sup>3</sup> Probably that of May 12 to Taché : A.A.S.B.

*Tuesday, 31st May, 1870*

Weather very sultry and warm.

No news of importance to give.

Settlement remains quiet.

The feeling against the Canadian volunteers coming here seems to be dying away and there is every prospect of a peaceable solution of our difficulties.

The mail went out as usual.

No word of Father Ri[t]chot or Scott yet and it is said that Mr. Black does not intend returning to the country.

Some of the winterers are leaving for the plains again on their summer hunt and trade.

*Wednesday, 1st June, 1870*

The weather to-day continued sultry and warm and in the evening there was a thunder shower which cooled the air.

Some say that Riel is undecided how to act but there is every reason to believe that he will not do anything now to compromise the country.

La Rocque who used to be pilot on the International was sent some time ago on a mission to St. Paul for Riel. He returned this evening having been only  $7\frac{1}{2}$  days on the trip from St. Cloud.

*Thursday, 2nd June, 1870*

Thursday fine & cool day.

The mail came in as usual.

Before it came in La Rocque brought in news that Dr. Schultz was at Duluth with 250 men from Canada but it was not believed; also that Fenians were on the move.

When the mail came in however no one could see anything about it in the papers.

The Steamer International left for Georgetown this evening.

Mr. Murphy<sup>1</sup> was on board with some furs.

Bishop Taché paid a visit to the White Horse Plains on some mission or another.

*Friday, 3rd June, 1870*

The day was cool again and pleasant.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

<sup>1</sup> Not identified.

## 378 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

The Settlement remains quiet.

Some of the winterers are leaving for the Plains and others are remaining behind to see Father Ri[t]chot—who is expected to arrive soon.

Henry McKenney's place is now completely closed up and he has moved altogether to Pembina. The latter place is not to be the head quarters of the American troops the Fort being located for [sic] a place near St. Jo.

*Saturday, 4th June, 1870*

Weather still pleasant looked little threatening towards night.

The mail went out as usual.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

*Sunday, 5th June, 1870*

The greatest storm raged to-day that has occurred this summer.

The services were consequently ill attended.

Mr. John Higgins lost his wife this morning—she never recovered from giving birth to her child a few days ago.

*Monday, 6th June, 1870*

The weather continued bad although not so much as yesterday.

No mail arrived to-day in consequence. The funeral of Mrs. Higgins was this morning.

Joseph Monkman is reported in the Settlement and it was said to-day that he was raising about two Hundred Swampy Indians to go out and meet the troops. This has been contradicted since.

A small chapel is being built in the town for the Sisters.

Dr. Bird is going on with his dwelling and stables and Mr. Alex. Sutherland has raised the frame of a fine store next to that of W. H. Lyons.

*Tuesday, 7th June, 1870*

The weather continued chilly and unpleasant all day.

The mail arrived late in the afternoon.

It appears from it that the Fenians are invading Canada and that there is a prospect of their stopping the Troops on their way to this country.<sup>1</sup> Father Ri[t]chot is expected daily and people are anxiously looking for his arrival.

<sup>1</sup> The invasion of the Eastern Townships of Quebec on May 25 and May 27. Both attacks were easily and decisively repulsed.



It is said that Riel has sent orders to the winterers not to leave till Father Ri[t]chot returns.

*Wednesday, 8th June, 1870*

The weather turned out better to-day.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

Trade has been more brisk of late and money a little more plentiful.

*Thursday, 9th June, 1870*

The weather continued fine and pleasant.

The swallows were busy all day building their nests under the eaves of the house.

It is said that Riel went out on a visit to Oak Point some time ago but was not well received there by the Nolins and their friends—they told him if he came amongst them they'd tie him up and kill him.

The mail came in as usual bringing news of Fenian fighting in Canada in which the Canadians were getting the best of it. No word of Father Ri[t]chot yet—it is said he was to leave on the 30th of last month.

*Friday, 10th June, 1870*

The weather continued fine to-day.

A great many reports of different kinds are out—about the intentions of Riel and his party one of which is their intention to declare for independence.<sup>1</sup>

Everything otherwise remains quiet.

There is some talk of the Boundary Line being placed this side of the Pembina Fort—and Adjutant General Lépine was ordered off with his guard by the Americans.

*Saturday, 11th June, 1870*

The weather still fine and pleasant.

Everything quiet in the settlement—nothing of importance occurring.

The mail went out as usual.

*Sunday, 12th June, 1870*

Weather in the morning threatened to turn out a very sultry day but it continued fine and pleasant without being too warm.

<sup>1</sup> This rumour no doubt resulted from the consideration being given to resisting the military expedition from Canada. See Introduction, p. 131, and No. XXVIII below.

A murder occurred last night at a place kept by "whiskey Tom".<sup>1</sup> It appears that a man named George in charge of the place got into a drunken row with one Roderick Cook and in the melee he shot Cook through the lungs. Cook after this knocked George down when the prostrate man fired at him again—missing him however.

Cook is not dead.

The usual services took place to-day.

*Monday, 13th June, 1870*

Another fine day—cool and pleasant.

To-day was the time reported to have been appointed for declaring the Independence of the Settlement but such a thing did not occur. A body of men were sent out to intercept George who shot Roderick Cook and take him prisoner.

Mr. Bannatyne and Dr. Bird went down to take the deposition of the dying man as to how the affair happened.

The mail came in—no news of importance except that the Fenians received a good licking from the Canadians.

No word of Ri[t]chot yet nor any of the other delegates.

Larsen who shot Johnston it is said is to be arrested also.

*Tuesday, 14th June, 1870*

This has been the warmest day of the season.

George the brewer who shot Roderick Cook is now in jail. The wounded man is improving and may recover altogether.

They attempted to arrest Larsen to-day but as they went into the door he jumped out of the back window.

The Nolins have joined in with Riel once more and now the French are all united but for peace not for war. The Bishop of St. Boniface advised that they should join in.

A rumor was afloat to-day that an amnesty to all political offenders has been declared.

Father Ri[t]chot left on the 31st and is expected in at any hour. He is bringing with him two advocates and two printers<sup>2</sup> as well as some others.

<sup>1</sup> Whisky Tom cannot be identified; his "place" was eight miles north of Winnipeg: W. F. Butler, *Great Lone Land*, p. 122.

<sup>2</sup> It was the policy of the clergy, now that union with Canada was imminent, to endeavour to provide effective secular leadership for the French community of Red River by persuading talented young professional men from Quebec to come West.

Everything quiet in the Settlement.  
The Mail went out as usual.

*Wednesday, 15th June, 1870*

Another warm day.

An enquiry into the case of George for the shooting of Cook resulted in his being let out on bail—himself being one surety and Tom Bunn and Dr. O'Donnell being the other two.

Cook is still improving and is likely to recover altogether.

Rumors of scouts being sent out in every direction are afloat.

The boats for Norway House left to-day having with them Mr. Hargrave the Secretary on board.

Mr. Donald A. Smith is to preside at the Council board<sup>1</sup>—he and Mr. Hardisty are going round to Norway House not deeming it safe to come near the Settlement on account of Smith's report.<sup>2</sup>

A rumor was afloat to the effect that thirty horsemen and a number of wagons had gone round by Gros [sic] Isle<sup>3</sup> towards the Stone Fort and a good deal of conjecture is afloat that their purpose is for no good.

*Thursday, 16th June, 1870*

The weather still very warm.

The mail came in very early.

No word of Father Ri[t]chot but it is possible he may be on the boat.

The balance of the troops for Fort William had not left Canada on the 1st of this month.

It is not expected that they will reach here before 1st August.

George is now out on bail.

A meeting of the Executive took place to-day.

It is reported that four or five persons have arrived and have gone over to the Bishop's. It is not known who they are.

With Ritchot came Joseph (later Sir Joseph) Dubuc, 1840–1914, member of Legislative Assembly and Executive Council of Manitoba, Justice and later Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench of Manitoba. His companion of this occasion was Charles Champagne, a law student.

<sup>1</sup> The Council of the Northern Department, the governing body over the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs in western Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory.

<sup>2</sup> That is, Smith's report to the Canadian Government on his mission; C.S.P., 1870 (12). Smith returned from Canada at this time.

<sup>3</sup> A wooded prominence on the plain north-west of Fort Garry.

## 382 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

*Friday, 17th June, 1870*

Weather continued warm with a sprinkling of rain in the afternoon. The Steamer International arrived about three O'Clock this afternoon. On board were Father Ri[t]chot with two gentlemen from Montreal Messrs. Dubuc and Champagne who are come here to settle it is said. It is rumored that everything has been arranged satisfactorily even to a general amnesty towards everyone.

Schultz it is reported has not been received very well by the government at Ottawa.

Mair is at St. Cloud.<sup>1</sup>

On the boat was Mr. Carpenter<sup>2</sup> the special correspondent of the New York Herald who will remain here till September—a nice gentlemanly person he seems to be.

Mr. Fortesque<sup>3</sup> of the Hudson Bay Coy was also on board with his family also Mrs. Houtman<sup>4</sup> Sargent Power's daughter.

A salute of 21 guns were fired as soon as Père Ri[t]chot arrived and it was ascertained that his mission had been successful.

The New Nation came out to-day.

*Saturday, 18th June, 1870*

Weather pleasant but warm.

A general feeling of satisfaction is felt at the successful result of Père Ri[t]chot's mission to Canada—and now there is little fear of any further trouble existing here.

Père Ri[t]chot states that he was well received in Ottawa by many of the people from Ontario as well as Quebec.

The mail went out as usual.

A meeting of the Executive is called for Tuesday to hear Père Ri[t]chot. Everything remains quiet.

*Sunday, 19th June, 1870*

To-day was a pleasant day.

This has been a fête day over at St. Boniface. The usual services took place in the other churches.

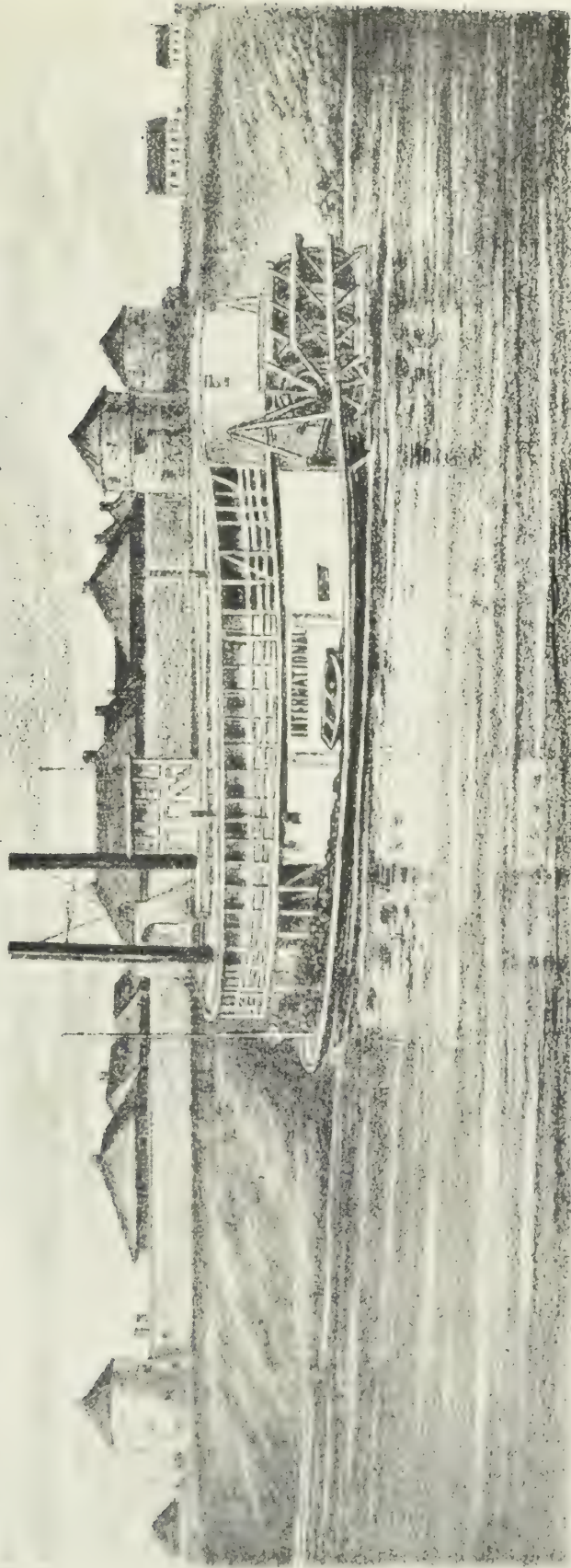
<sup>1</sup> That is, Mair was returning from Canada : Q.U.L., Mair Papers, Denison to Mair, June 14, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Carpenter has not been otherwise identified.

<sup>3</sup> Chief Trader Joseph Fortescue ; in charge of Oxford House, 1868.

<sup>4</sup> Name uncertain and not otherwise identified.





FORT GARRY AND STEAMER "INTERNATIONAL."

The picture is from the *Canadian Illustrated News*, December, 1869, p. 100.



Everything quiet.

It is said that Captain Gay has left the Fort.

*Monday, 20th June, 1870*

The weather continues fine.

It now seems that Father Ri[t]chot's mission has been a very complete and successful one—and that the troops are not to leave Fort William until news has been received in Canada that the terms have been accepted by the people here—and it is rumored that a general amnesty is to be declared and in fact it is said that it came with Father Ri[t]chot.<sup>1</sup>

The mail arrived to-day but brought no news of importance.

Everything remains quiet and the Legislative Assembly are to meet on Thursday to hear the report of Father Ri[t]chot.

It is said Scott the delegate is on the road here with McKenney.

*Tuesday, 21st June, 1870*

Weather continued fine.

The executive met to-day but Father Ri[t]chot was unable to attend on account of illness. Everything however goes to show that matters have been satisfactorily arranged.

Robert Tait has been created Sheriff but it is hardly the appointment to give general satisfaction.<sup>2</sup>

*Wednesday, 22nd June, 1870*

Weather exceedingly warm to-day and towards evening in the afternoon we had a very sever[e] thunder storm which lasted for some time.

The mosquitoes are very bad this season and it is thought that the freighters will lose a great many of their animals on the trip from the effects of the mosquitoes.

Notices were sent round that the members of the Legislative Assembly were to meet to-morrow.

The plain hunters have left for their hunting and trading grounds—and those from the Saskatchewan are now beginning to arrive—they have not done as well as was expected.

W. H. Lyons is putting up a warehouse behind his store—and George Emerling seems to be preparing to build.

<sup>1</sup> This, of course, was not true.

<sup>2</sup> Henry McKenney had removed to Pembina, and had resigned the Shrievalty ; see *New Nation*, May 13 and June 24, 1870.

*Thursday, 23rd June, 1870*

Weather continued warm.

The Legislative Assembly was to have sat to-day but on account of the absence of Riel with Father Ri[t]chot they did not sit to-day.

The mail came in late bringing no further news of importance.

Some Canadians and their families have been stopped at Pembina by Riel's guard—and are remaining there they having come down from Abercrombie in a flat boat.

*Friday, 24th June, 1870*

Weather still very warm and sultry. The mosquitoes continue very bad—especially at night.

The Legislative Assembly met to-day and heard the report of Father Ri[t]chot—which proved very favorable. The Assembly accepted the terms and a special messenger is to be sent to-morrow with a letter inviting Mr. Archibald<sup>1</sup> to come in immediately and assume the reins of government at once so as to be here to receive the troops and to show that he does not come in at the point of the bayonet.

It appears that an amnesty has been granted by promise of Sir Clinton Murdoch and Sir John Young as special commissioners from the crown in Canada to meet our delegates.<sup>2</sup>

The troops were not to leave Fort William until news had been received from the Provisional Government of the acceptance or non acceptance of the terms from Canada.

Both England and Canada fully recognized the Provisional Government as that of the country.<sup>3</sup>

This 24th day of June therefore is the turning point in the affairs of the Settlement.

Some of the members of the Legislative Assembly got drunk to-night at George Emerlings in honour of the occasion.

Roderick Cook who was shot by George is recovering from his wound—George is at large.

A great deal of feeling is beginning to be stirred up amongst the English

<sup>1</sup> Adams G. Archibald, 1814–1892, of Nova Scotia ; Secretary of State, July, 1867–May, 1870 ; Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, 1870–1873 ; Lieutenant-Governor of Nova Scotia, 1873–1883, M.P. Colchester, 1888–1891.

<sup>2</sup> That Murdoch and Young made such a promise was always affirmed by Ritchot, and was denied by Murdoch and the Governor-General.

<sup>3</sup> A statement of doubtful validity, but the whole passage illustrates the belief in which the Manitoba Act was accepted.



speaking settlers to the effect that the French are getting all the concessions and they nothing. Schemers are still at work.

*Saturday, 25th June, 1870*

Weather still continued warm to-day.

There was a meeting of the Executive to-day to frame a reply accepting the terms of Canada.

This being done the Mail man was ordered to call at the Fort and get the letter.

There is also to be a special messenger sent with another letter inviting Mr. Archibald to come in and assume the reigns [sic] of government before the troops come in.

*Sunday, 26th June, 1870*

Weather still very warm.

Bishop Taché announced to-day from the pulpit his intention of starting by the first boat for Canada. His mission is to be partly on account of church duties and also on business connected with the state of the country.<sup>1</sup>

The other usual services took place to-day.

*Monday, 27th June, 1870*

Weather still very warm.

Bishop Taché went up to White Horse Plains to-day to see his people.

Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

Things remain quiet in the settlement although the Indians below the Stone Fort keep banded together under Prince.

There is also an under current of feeling amongst the English against the Manitoba Bill—they think that it is altogether in favor of the Roman Catholic Church and against them.

The mail came in as usual—no news of importance.

*Tuesday, 28th June, 1870*

Weather still continues warm.

The International left for Georgetown this forenoon having on board Bishop Taché and Archdeacon McLean. The former it is supposed will accompany Mr. Archibald back to Red River when he comes in to take the reins of government.

The latter is on a visit to his friends in Canada.

<sup>1</sup> That is, the uncertainty respecting the amnesty.

## 386 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

Bishop Taché it is believed has with him the invitation to Mr. Archibald to come in as Governor.

*Wednesday, 29th June, 1870*

Weather still warm.

The Provisional Government has commenced collecting back duties and seem to have engaged La Rocque the old pilot of the International for the purpose.

Everything remains quiet as usual.

Buildings are going forward—John Sutherland P.[oint] D.[ouglas]<sup>1</sup> intends going on with his new building at once.

Mr. Bannatyne is putting up a large building.

*Thursday, 30th June, 1870*

Weather still very warm.

The mail came in in good time bringing little if any news.

The meeting of the Executive still sits every Thursday.

Settlement quiet.

*Friday, 1st July, 1870*

Weather still warm.

“ Dominion Day ” to-day was not kept up by Canadians or anybody else.

Mr. Ellwood had a very small Union Jack hoisted outside his shop door.

Everything remained quiet no stir at all going on.

The New Nation came out to-day.

*Saturday, 2nd July, 1870*

Weather still very warm.

Nothing of importance going on in the Settlement.

Building in the town is progressing rapidly.

A good many rumors are afloat about Indian troubles but it is not thought that they will amount to anything. Evidently some one is working behind the scenes upon the Indians. It being suspected that certain parties living at the Lower end of the Settlement and who were mixed up in our late troubles are concerned in it.

*Sunday, 3rd July, 1870*

Weather still fine—clouded up a little in the afternoon but cleared away afterwards.

<sup>1</sup> To be distinguished from John Sutherland of East Kildonan ; see note 1 on p. 283.

The usual services took place to-day.

To-morrow being 4th July, the American residents of Winnipeg were making preparations to celebrate it. George Emerling decorated the front of his hotel with green branches preparatory to the morrow. H. F. O'Lone having obtained the use of one of the cannons from the Fort hauled it into his saloon so as to prevent anyone from meddling with it.

*Monday, 4th July, 1870*

The Americans ushered in the day (which turned out a fine one) with a salute of thirteen guns. All day long they kept firing off guns and crackers and every now and again a salute from the cannon. A good many got as near being drunk as possible during the day without actually becoming so. There were no quarrels no fights and the day passed off pleasantly.

In the evening Mr. Ellwood and Bob O'Lone had a sparring of words which resulted altogether in *gas*.

There were threatening clouds several times but we had no rain.

The mail came in as usual.

*Tuesday, 5th July, 1870*

The weather still warm.

Nothing of importance going on.

There is a good deal of talk about discontent amongst the English speaking people but this is not to be wondered at as they have [not?] been in the movement and now since everything has been granted that was asked or nearly everything,—the English are jealous. Prince has sent up word to the Indians (Bungees)<sup>1</sup> at the Portage to come down and hold a consultation with him—and it is said they accepted his invitation. The only Indians at the Portage is the small band of Sioux of Minnesota Massacre fame.

The mail went out as usual.

*Wednesday, 6th July, 1870*

Weather still fine.

There are two bands of Indians camped down the settlement—one near the Rapids and the other Princes band. It is said that Simpson M.P. for

<sup>1</sup> That is, Ojibways, not Sioux.

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Algoma<sup>1</sup> who is on his way from Superior to arrange with Indians sent word to Prince to remain quiet till he came—which Prince intends to do. Prince some time ago sent three men as far as Fort Frances to watch for the troops but they came back and reported nothing.

*Thursday, 7th July, 1870*

Weather still fine and warm but pleasant.

The mail came in—no news of any importance.

The executive continues to meet on Thursdays but did not do so to-day as Riel and O'Donohue were out at Pointe du Chêne arranging about some land questions.

Father Ri[t]chot is going to build a chapel in commemoration of the people of Red River obtaining their rights.

*Friday, 8th July, 1870*

Weather still fine and pleasant.

A flat boat belonging to Smith and McLean arrived to-day. It brought some passengers as far as Pembina but the guards stopped them there until they could give an account of themselves.

The boat brought goods for several parties in the Settlement.

The New Nation came out to-day.

The delegate Alfred H. Scott arrived to-day.

*Saturday, 9th July, 1870*

The weather continued fine to-day with a slight shower towards the afternoon.

The usual mail went out to-day.

There is every prospect of the Stage soon running between here and St. Cloud or Abercrombie. Nothing definite however has been heard of when it will commence.

Scott the delegate has been drunk all day.

*Sunday, 10th July, 1870*

The weather was fine to-day with a fine shower towards noon.

The usual services took place to-day

Scott the delegate still drunk.

<sup>1</sup> Wemyss McKenzie Simpson, M.P. for Algoma, 1867–1871 ; appointed Indian Commissioner in the latter year.



*Monday, 11th July, 1870*

The weather took a sudden change to cold—or rather chilly.

The mail came in as usual but brought little if any news.

Everything remains quiet. A noticeable thing around the outskirts of the town this summer is the almost complete absence of Indians camped.

No word of the troops leaving Fort William yet.

*Tuesday, 12th July, 1870*

There was a slight frost last evening and a very slight fall of snow this morning.

The mail went out as usual.

A number of French Canadians have arrived from Canada amongst others some printers who are up here with the intention of starting a French paper.<sup>1</sup>

Also an Architect and builder.

*Wednesday, 13th July, 1870*

The weather still continues chilly.

Farmers are preparing for haying.

The grasshoppers in some parts have done and are doing a great deal of damage to the settlement while they have not visited other portions of it.

They are now beginning to take wing and will probably leave the Settlement in a few days. The want of rain is much felt in some parts of the Settlement especially that around the town.

A man named Sandy Harkness<sup>2</sup> having become drunk got very abusive towards a priest in the Fort and was arrested and put in one of the bastions. In trying to escape he fell down and injured himself very much—cutting his head. The man is lame and consequently could not get down easily from the wall.

*Thursday, 14th July, 1870*

The weather a little warmer to-day.

The mail came in but brought no news of importance.

Mrs. Young & son<sup>3</sup> arrived to-day from Canada in company with Mr. Hardisty.

<sup>1</sup> *Le Métis*, first published on May 27, 1871. The French workmen who arrived at this date were Felix Trudel and N. D. Gagnier, printers, Victor Beaupré, one Carpenter, and a boy named Garand, besides Dubuc and Champagne.

<sup>2</sup> Not identified.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. George Young, wife of the Reverend George Young, and G. H. Young, their son.

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It was rumored that the young man was taken into the Fort on his arrival—but this was contradicted. It is said he had boasted of having spiked a cannon before he left last winter.

The Executive Council met to-day.

*Friday, 15th July, 1870*

The weather still warmer and more pleasant.

Nothing of importance going on.

The New Nation did not come out having changed its day of issue to Saturday.

It turned out untrue that Rev. M[r]. Young's son was taken into the Fort.

*Saturday, 16th July, 1870*

The weather turned out fine and pleasant.

The mail went out as usual.

Indian rumors continue.

Word came in that a body of Red Lakers<sup>1</sup> were on their way in and that their true purpose was unknown.

Riel and his government seem to be on the alert for them.

The New Nation came out.

*Sunday, 17th July, 1870*

A warm and pleasant day.

The usual services took place.

Nothing of interest.

*Monday, 18th July, 1870*

A pleasant day—signs of approaching storm caused by the heat.

The mail came in as usual.

A large number of Indians are in. Riel has given them presents. Rumor had it that Simpson Canadian Indian Agent had turned back from Fort Frances—another report was that the Indians were quarrelling amongst themselves regarding precedence in title of chiefs—and that Simpson could not arrange with them but that he had not gone back.

*Tuesday, 19th July, 1870*

Weather very warm with thunder shower in the afternoon.

A tremendous storm of hail occurred down the settlement—the hail

<sup>1</sup> Chippewa Indians of Red Lake, Minnesota, the inveterate enemy of the Sioux.

stones in some places being as large as hens eggs. Great numbers of windows were broken over 40 in one house belonging to Mr. Bernard Ross.

The mail went out as usual.

What is termed the Canadian party is making themselves very busy of late secretly but sufficiently open to endeavour to cause trouble.

*Barney Ross  
never owned a  
house with 40  
windows in it.  
1888<sup>1</sup>*

*Wednesday, 20th July, 1870*

Weather still warm but pleasant.

The Steamer International came in this evening. As it rounded coming into the Assiniboine from the Red River it touched the point nearest Fort Garry when Willie Drever and a stranger jumped off.<sup>2</sup> The stranger disappeared mysteriously and Wm. Drever went home. Soon afterwards W. Drever was arrested on account of the suspicious actions of himself and the stranger in thus jumping off the boat. The stranger said to be one Butler or Baker left some baggage on the boat.

*Thursday, 21st July, 1870*

Weather very warm.

Some considerable excitement is felt over the disappearance of the stranger amongst the French.

He has not turned up yet and a great many reports are circulating about him—he gave himself out as an officer in the 69th Regiment—and it is said had a dog with him as he said he was coming to Red River to have some hunting.

It turns out that John Gordon and it is said Whiskey Tom took the stranger from the boat down to some place of safety in the Settlement. The Drevs and all their crowd are in great glee about it.

The mail came in as usual bringing very little news.

Wm. Drever is still in the Fort.

*Friday, 22nd July, 1870*

Weather gave token of being very warm during the day.

This morning Riel received from Mr. J. H. McTavish a Proclamation

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in a different hand.

<sup>2</sup> The stranger was Captain W. F. Butler, scouting for Colonel G. J. Wolseley, commander of the Red River expedition. See W. F. Butler, *The Great Lone Land* (London, 1871), pp. 117–118.

from Genl. or Colonel Wolsey brought into the Settlement by the mysterious stranger. Riel after some consultation<sup>1</sup> decided upon printing and issuing a couple of hundred copies and circulating them amongst the people. This was accordingly done and caused a great deal of feeling amongst the "trooly loyal" because Riel attempted to circulate a Royal Proclamation. They are disappointed again.

The mysterious stranger has not turned up. W. Drever is still in the Fort.

It is said Mr. Ballsillie<sup>2</sup> has gone to the Stone Fort to try and get the stranger to come up.

There is some considerable excitement about the stranger amongst all parties.

*Saturday, 23rd July, 1870*

Weather fine and pleasant.

The following is the proclamation from Colonel Wolsey issued and published by Riel and the printing superintended personally by him during last night at the New Nation Office—

#### TO THE LOYAL INHABITANTS OF MANITOBA

Her Majesty's Government having determined upon stationing some troops amongst you, I have been instructed by the Lieut. General Commanding in British North America to proceed to Fort Garry with the force under my command. Our mission is one of peace and the sole object of the expedition is to secure Her Majesty's sovereign authority—Courts of Law such as are common to every portion of Her Majesty's Empire will be duly established and Justice will be impartially administered to all races and to all classes. The Loyal Indians or Half Breeds being as dear to our Queen as any others of Her Loyal Subjects.

The force which I have the honor of commanding will enter your Province representing no party either in Religion or Politics, and will afford equal protection to the lives and property of all races and of all creeds.

The strictest order and discipline will be maintained and private property will be carefully respected. All supplies furnished by the Inhabitants to the Troops will be duly paid for—should any one consider himself injured by any individual attached to the force his grievance shall be promptly enquired into.

<sup>1</sup> With A. G. B. Bannatyne : A.A.S.B., Bannatyne to Taché, August 6, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Probably John Balsillie, accountant at Fort Garry.



All Loyal people are earnestly invited to aid me in carrying out the above mentioned objects.

G. J. WOLSELEY

Colonel

Commanding Red River Force.<sup>1</sup>

Prince Arthur's Landing  
30th June 1870.

*Saturday, 23rd July, 1870*

This Proclamation was written both in French and English but the English side had no date to it.

The New Nation came out to-day having the Proclamation in it.

Wm. Drever has been set at liberty.

Captain Butler of the 69th Regiment (the mysterious stranger) arrived to-day in the town of Winnipeg. He is said to be a fine man and the right one for the place.

Riel called on him and had a conversation with him.<sup>2</sup>

The American party are now dreadfully down on Riel for issuing the Proclamation—they say that he has sold them—and they would hang him if they could. Capt. Butler returned to the Stone Fort to-day.

Men are to be engaged from all parts of the settlement to go to work on the road to the Lake of the Woods—French English and Canadian—each party under different heads.<sup>3</sup> O'Donohue and his party feel themselves regularly beaten and are trying their best to kick up a row. O'Donohue tried to publish the following letter in the New Nation respecting the arrival of the mysterious stranger and the issuing of the Proclamation by Riel. It appears that O'Donohue was not consulted in the matter of the Proclamation by Riel.

Editor New Nation.

Sir,

Having noticed the tranquility of affairs considerably disturbed for the past two days would it be amiss to enquire into the cause. We have remarked

<sup>1</sup> The Proclamation is printed in *The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 383 ; copies are in the Archives of the Archbishopric of St. Boniface. No official copy seems to exist.

<sup>2</sup> W. F. Butler records this conversation in his *The Great Lone Land* (London, 1871), pp. 133-136.

<sup>3</sup> To finish the road for the use of the Expedition. Wolseley had applied to the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company for these parties. The route was not used, according to Huyshe, *Red River Expedition* (London, 1871), p. 163, because of uncertainty as to its condition.

immediately after the landing of the International guards flying in all directions and found out on enquiry that some mysterious person a passenger thereon had made a leap from the boat as she turned the point to enter the Assiniboine. Now who can this bold daring adventurer be? Are we always to be disturbed by foreigners making their way into this country in disguise.

Again this morning the curiosity of the public was aroused by a proclamation supposed to be from Colonel Wolseley to the "loyal" inhabitants of Manitoba—the issuing of which from your office this morning explains the curiosity we had about your office being lighted up all last night and the presence of President Riel there superintending the work. Many people seem to doubt the authenticity of this proclamation and want to know if certified to by any person but this is impossible as it came by mail. We are afraid the whole thing is another Col. Dennis affair.

Please answer the queries and oblige the public

Yours,

A SUBSCRIBER

As you have not required correspondents names it is not necessary to have the writers. Let the Prest. come out with the explanations.

Yours

O'D<sup>1</sup>

A report was out this evening that Governor Archibald would be in on Tuesday and that the pensioners were ordered out to meet him—fudge! A big row occurred in Lennons Saloon—in which the proprietor wanted to hang Riel for having sold the Americans in the settlement—the police soon shut up the place.

The mail went out as usual.<sup>2</sup>

### [END OF JOURNAL]

<sup>1</sup> The letter was not published by the *New Nation*.

<sup>2</sup> It is not apparent why the *Journal* should end abruptly at this point.

## DOCUMENTS RELATING TO THE RED RIVER RESISTANCE, 1869-1870

### I: LETTER FROM CHARLES MAIR<sup>1</sup> TO HOLMES MAIR.

[*Reprinted from Perth Courier in Toronto Globe, January 4, 1869.*]

The following are extracts from another private letter from the pen of Mr. Charles Mair, now of Red River, to his brother Holmes,<sup>2</sup> of Lanark village, which, through the kindness of the latter gentleman, we have been allowed to publish:—

Head-Quarters, Mistamiskano,<sup>3</sup>  
November 19th, 1868

Dear Brother,—I received your long and welcome letter yesterday, and also the papers, but not yet the “Saturdays”<sup>4</sup> you mention, and which I miss very much,—They will yet come along, I have no doubt, but tardily; as the irregularity of the mails to Fort Garry is simply a matter of course. I wrote to you from Fort Garry, and Dr. Schultz has instructed the editor of the *Nor’ Wester* to send on the paper to you and James<sup>5</sup> regularly. Our trip over the prairies was a stupendous novelty to me. You can imagine nothing like it; but I shall not dwell upon it here. I also briefly described the appearance of the village of Winnipeg, and I need say nothing further about that either, at present.

After putting up at the Dutchman’s hotel there,<sup>6</sup> I went over and stayed at Dr. Schultz’s, after a few days. The change was comfortable, I assure you, from the racket of a motley crowd of half-breeds, playing billiards and drinking, to the quiet and solid comfort of a home. I was

<sup>1</sup> This private letter from Charles Mair to his brother Holmes, which unexpectedly and inexcusably received such wide publicity, was the cause of much resentment in Red River; Mrs. A. G. B. Bannatyne whipped Mair publicly for it. Published in the local paper by his brother, it was reproduced by the *Globe* of Toronto and the *Gazette* of Montreal. An earlier one, printed in the *Courier* of December 11, appeared in the *Globe*, December 14, 1868. In it Mair declared the Winnipeg region “the richest country in the world”.

<sup>2</sup> Holmes R. Mair, later of Westbourne, Manitoba, and, like his brother, a versifier.

<sup>3</sup> The name given by Snow and Mair to their headquarters near Oak Point; a Cree word meaning “Big Trail”.

<sup>4</sup> It has not been possible to identify these; presumably Mair means “weeklies”.

<sup>5</sup> James Mair, another brother.

<sup>6</sup> Emmerling’s Hotel; the proprietor was known as “Dutch George”.

invited to dinner-party at Beffs [sic], where I found the Governor's Brother-in-law, a wealthy merchant here, Isabister [sic], and other Nor' Westers.<sup>1</sup> Altogether, I received hospitalities to my heart's content, and I left the place thoroughly pleased with most that I had met. There are jealousies and heart-burnings, however. Many wealthy people are married to half-breed women, who, having no coat of arms but a "totem" to look back to, make up for the deficiency by biting at the backs of their "white" sisters. The white sisters fall back upon their whiteness, whilst the husbands meet each other with desperate courtesies and hospitalities, with a view to filthy lucre in the back-ground. \* \* \*

We crossed the Red River to St. Boniface, opposite to Fort Garry, the Doctor driving me out in his gig, and drove over the virgin prairie for thirty miles due east, to Oak Point, which we have dubbed Mistamiskano, and where we have established our head-quarters. The country traversed is a beautiful one, covered with a tall, luxuriant hay which springs from a loamy surface in many places four feet deep, resting upon clay of any depth. Inconceivably rich, indeed, is all this country; boundless and rich beyond all description or comparison. At Oak Point, we rented a house from a half-breed, a description of which I have given in my other letter. Here also begin the woods which stretch clear through to the Lake of the Woods. This wood consists mainly of small poplar,<sup>2</sup> a sort of bastard red pine,<sup>3</sup> a few cedars,<sup>4</sup> and vast quantities of red willows, or *quawpemug*,<sup>5</sup> as the Crees call them. It in no respect resembles a Canadian forest, but rather the growth which springs up in place of a pinery when a fire has swept it away, with this singular difference, however, that it rests upon a perfectly level country almost, and is nourished by rich loams, instead of rock and sand. The poplar is the firewood chiefly used here, and is burnt when dry. Few of them are over six inches in diameter, but they burn briskly and give much heat. About ten miles from here, a shanty has been built, and twenty men are now at work upon the road. Of course, through such a country as I have

<sup>1</sup> It is evident that the printer had difficulty with Mair's script. The dinner party was at Alexander Begg's; the Governor's brother-in-law was A. G. B. Bannatyne; Isabister was presumably Inkster. Was it at this party that Mair misconducted himself, as "Dot", his fictitious counter-part, did in Begg's satirical novel *Dot-it-Down*, pp. 286-287?

<sup>2</sup> In the main, the "white" poplar of the west (*populus tremuloides*).

<sup>3</sup> The jack pine (*pinus banksiana*).

<sup>4</sup> The white cedar (*thya occidentales* L.).

<sup>5</sup> (*Cornus Stolonisera*). Locally named "Red Willow".



described, there is little difficulty in the work of destruction. The timber is small, the country is level and free from stones (except boulder), and there is an easy drainage into the numerous rivers (creeks we would call them in Canada) which invariably cut their way for twenty feet or more beneath the surface. I was out at the works to-day, and the cleared portion of the track looks very fine and straight. Certainly, when all is grubbed out and graded, it will be a magnificent road.

There are not many Indians in this neighbourhood at present, most of them being away in pursuit of peltries. The word "wigwam" is never heard here. In speaking of an Indian's home it is called a "lodge."<sup>1</sup> The "lodge in some vast wilderness" that Cowper sighed for, can be had cheap here—dirt cheap. It is composed of skins stretched over some eight or nine poles standing on end on the ground, and converging to a common centre near the top (an illustration here accompanies this description, which, of course, we are unable to reproduce in print). The smoke from the fire, which is built in the centre of the lodge, issues out of the top, and, though very comfortable with its buffalo robes and skins of all kinds, it has a very rakish and *Ojibway-ish* look. I never look at one without fancying to myself that it is full of wolves inside. This is the Nor'West Indian's house, and they are to be met with everywhere from Rainy Lake to the Mackenzie River. It looks odd, however, to see them scattered about the village of Winnipeg, where the "poor Indian" comes to barter and drink fire-water.

Next spring, I shall have an opportunity of smoking the *calmut* [sic]<sup>2</sup> with the fierce Plain Crees and the Blackfeet, who come down on horse-back annually to have a "talk," and smoke the pipe of peace with their "Father" at the stone Fort. These are the real Indians, wild and eloquent; and the Doctor tells me it is a strange sight to see them at their dances and medicine mysteries, circumscribing that little speck of civilization—the future city of Winnipeg. Many of the Sioux, who committed the horrible outrages in Minnesota,<sup>3</sup> are now about Lake Manitobah [sic], and the Doctor is coming out next week to take me back to the village for a trip up the Assinniboine [sic] some seventy-five miles, to Portage la Prairie and Lake Manitobah. At Portage la Prairie will be the most flourishing city in this great West, for many reasons, which I will defer giving until I have been there.

<sup>1</sup> Mair speaks of the plains *tipi*, which is as he describes it. But the *wigwam* of the Ojibway was known in Red River.

<sup>2</sup> The *calumet*, or peace pipe.

<sup>3</sup> The massacre of 1862.

So far as I have yet seen, the country is *great*—inexhaustible—inconceivably rich. Farming here is a pleasure—there is no toil in it, and all who do farm are comfortable, and some wealthy. What do you think of a farmer within a bowshot of here, being worth seven or eight thousand pounds sterling, and selling to the Hudson's Bay Company last week £5,000 stg.worth of cattle: a man who came from Lower Canada nineteen years ago, not worth sixpence.

The half-breeds are the only people here who are starving. Five thousand of them have to be fed this winter, and it is their own fault, they won't farm. They will hunt buffaloes, drive ox-carts 500 miles up and 500 miles back to St. Cloud, at the rate of twenty miles a day: do anything but farm. Hitherto, it was so easy to live here that it didn't matter whether they farmed or not; but the grasshopper put a stop to that last summer, and now they are on their beam-ends. As for the farmers: Scotch, English and French, not one of them requires relief; other than seed wheat, which they are quite able to pay for. This is the true state of the case here, but it does not lessen the claims upon humanity. It will take £40,000 to feed the people through to next fall; but the £40,000 will be forthcoming.

As for the future of this country, it is as inevitable as to-morrow's sunrise. The climate is delightful. The weather just now, and there is no appearance of a change, is clear, cloudless, bland and inspiring; and the thermometer has not sunk below 30° for a week. In deep winter, there are short spells of severe weather, but they are short; so they all tell me, and certainly my experience so far justifies the assertion. I never felt such fine weather in November in Canada as we have here just now: and there is an exhilaration in it quite new to me. But enough for the present.

Mr. Snow has gone off for a week to survey, and I drove him out to the first shanty, 10 miles out, where he will remain until Saturday. \* \* \* I received a letter from John Parker, yesterday, enquiring about his brother.<sup>1</sup> I saw in the Post-office at Fort Garry, a lot of papers (*Couriers*)<sup>2</sup> for him, and made some enquiries at the time, but no one seemed to know him. I have requested Dr. Schultz to make enquiries, and as I go up with the Doctor to Portage la Prairie next week, I can myself endeavour

<sup>1</sup> The George Parker, presumably, imprisoned by Riel; see note 1 on p. 225 and note 5 on p. 316 of Begg's *Journal*. Parker had come west in 1868; see *Globe*, August 12, 1868, quoting his letter in the *Perth Courier*.

<sup>2</sup> That is, *Perth Couriers*.

to discover his whereabouts. John says he has not heard from him since July, and it is not difficult in this country to be taken out of the way, and never be heard of afterwards, should one be careless. I scarcely think, however, that he is in this settlement, or I should have heard of him.

I enclose you a feather of the prairie-chicken; also an oak leaf picked up "in the Land of the Dacotah," 150 miles south of this. The hay enclosed is the celebrated prairie "wire-grass;"<sup>1</sup> the other article is a strip of wild sage which grows extensively on the prairies. The finest hops I ever saw were growing wild at Eagle River, Dacotah Territory.

## II: LETTER FROM A HALF-BREED (L.R.) TO *Le Nouveau Monde*

[Reprinted from *Le Nouveau Monde*, February 25, 1869].<sup>2</sup>

[Translation]

We have received from Red River a letter written by a half-breed who is rightly indignant at the stupidities which a certain Mr. Mair has just published in the *Globe* of Toronto and the *Gazette* of Montreal.

We have already made known the conduct of the agent of the Canadian government, Mr. Snow, who is now taking advantage of the famine of the unfortunate settlers of Red River to make them work at starvation wages; our readers will see to-day from what authentic sources the journals named above obtain their information about Red River, its climate, its inhabitants, the fertility of the soil, the extent of the want which obtains there, etc.

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Red River, February 1, 1869

Mr. Editor :

Please be so good as to give me a little space in the columns of your journal, in order that I too may write of Red River.

I cannot resist that desire since I have read the enormities which a

<sup>1</sup> Probably *andropogon scoparius*.

<sup>2</sup> This letter from the *Nouveau Monde* is reproduced both because it is a reply to Mair's and because it was almost certainly written by Louis Riel. Mair was the enthusiastic advocate of settlement in the North-West; Riel replies in the doubtful and defensive vein of Bishop Taché's *Esquisse sur le nord-ouest de l'Amérique Septentrionale* (Montreal, 1869), and of the *Nouveau Monde* itself, an ultramontane journal with an interest in the Catholic missions of the North-West. Riel was alleged to write for the *Nouveau Monde*; his friend, the Reverend L. R. Giroux, who came to Red River in 1868, certainly did so for the *Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe*; L.-A. Prud'homme, *Monsieur L'Abbé Louis Raymond Giroux* (Quebec, 1922), p. 7.

journal of Upper Canada, the *Globe*, has just uttered, in publishing a letter of a certain Mr. Mair, who arrived in Red River last fall. This gentleman, an English Canadian, is, it is said, gifted in making verses; if such is the fact I should advise him strongly to cultivate his talent, for in that way his writings would make up in rhyme for what they lack in reason.

Scarcely a month after his arrival in this country, Mr. Mair desired to describe it and its inhabitants. He succeeded rather like the navigator who, passing by a league from the coast, wrote in his log: "*The people of this country seemed to us to be well disposed.*"

The climate of Red River, says Mr. Mair, in his letter, is most agreeable. On the 19th of November there were not three degrees of frost. I had heard it said, of course, but I know it by experience now.

Well now! If he had arrived here in the night, and had been able to write down his impressions at once, he would have said in the same way: "*Here the sun never rises; the densest darkness constantly blankets these vast territories.*"

That is rather like what he has done in speaking of the climate after two weeks' trial. He does not know that very often the ice sets by All Souls' Day; that we have snow storms, even in the middle of October; that last year, during the month of January, the thermometer stood continually at from 25 to 30 degrees centigrade and that very often we have it as cold as 40 degrees. This year Providence, which had already well tested us, has wished to spare us cold weather, but because of that it is not necessary to say that we live under the torrid zone.

The country, he adds, is of an inconceivable richness: those who wish to farm are all rich; only the half-breeds are in distress.

Well, I am a half-breed myself and I say that there is nothing false than those words. I know almost all the names of those who received help this winter, and I can assure you that they were of all colours. There are some half-breeds who do not ask for charity, as there are some English, some Germans and some Scots, who receive it every week.<sup>1</sup>

It was not, of course, enough for these gentlemen to come to mock the distress of our country by making unfortunate people driven by hunger, work dirt cheap. They had also to spread falsehoods among the outside world, to lead people to believe that the relief sent to R.R. was not needed.

<sup>1</sup> This statement is fully borne out by P.A.M., Minutes of the Executive Relief Committee; it was, however, the hunters and tripmen, all of mixed blood and in the majority *métis*, who suffered most. No relief was requested in Kildonan.



Happily there was other more trustworthy testimony published in the newspapers to contradict such tainted reports.

"One can", says he again, "judge of the richness of certain individuals by a sale of cattle to the Company, by a single settler. He sold £5000 worth of stock." Indeed!

Do you know that in estimating them at ten pounds a head, he would have to have had five hundred, to reach such a sum? Let us take a step further, for no one in R.R. ever had five hundred animals to sell, nor even a hundred.<sup>1</sup>

He adds: "The future of the country is as inevitable as to-morrow's sunrise."

That is what is known as casting a horoscope. And who indeed up to to-day has ever doubted the future of this country? Yes, unless indeed God causes an earthquake in this small part of the globe, this country like all others, will have some kind of future, but not that which Mr. Mair predicts for it.

I know some men who have more than two weeks' experience and who say the opposite to this gentleman. He says finally: *the city of Portage la Prairie is destined to become one of the most important in the country: however, I shall not speak to you of it until I have seen it.*

And why not? You speak of a great many other things that you have not had time to see or know; that would be worth as much as the remainder of your letter; as much as the scarcely courteous terms, I will even say barely civilized, which you use in speaking of the ladies of the country, who certainly by all reports are quite equal to the ladies of your country.

Be it said in passing, Mr. Mair, if we had only you as specimen of civilized men, we should not have a very high idea of them. If I wished to amuse myself by wielding the pen as you do for the sole pleasure of uttering follies to the world, I should have some amusing things to say on your account. . . .

In other circumstances than those in which we are, I should not have taken note of the falsehoods of this letter. We are accustomed to see strangers arrive every year who come to look us up and down, and who then print in the newspapers or in big books their reflections more or less queer on us and our country; but after the bad times which have befallen on us, driven as we are to have recourse to public charity, I have thought

<sup>1</sup> This also is true; stock raising in Red River was on a small scale, because of the severity of the winter and the difficulty of procuring sufficient hay.

that it was my duty to protest against falsehoods which could give the impression elsewhere that there was no need of relief in Red River.

L. R.

### III: SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE BY CHARLES MAIR TO THE *Globe*.

[*Reprinted from the Globe, May 28, 1869*].<sup>1</sup>

Fort Garry, 25th April, 1869

#### INTRODUCTION.

In my last letter I stated that the following article would be devoted to a detail of the disadvantages attending settlement in our North-west Territories. But, though this promise will be redeemed in due time, yet further travel and observation have impressed me lately with so strong a sense of the wonderful capabilities and resources of this country, that I feel in a manner compelled to diverge from the more immediate purpose, and once again attract the reader's attention to the brighter side.

The portion of the country about to be described possesses natural characteristics so striking as to make pardonable a frequent employment of warm superlatives in order to present its aspect appropriately to the reader ; and, though the description may seem to some overdrawn and enthusiastic, yet I entreat even the most incredulous to hold their unbeliefs in abeyance until such time as they or their friends may find occasion either to verify or falsify the contents of this letter. A writer's very honour depends upon this test, which after all is the final one ; and, though men see with various eyesights, yet in the presence of such a test I have no doubt the most sceptical will be compelled to admit that there are some portions of the earth's surface where the ordinary conditions of life are reversed, and toil becomes a pleasure. The foregoing remarks may seem irrelevant to the reader, but there is some reason in them for all that. By a late letter from a friend I learn that Governor McTavish stated, while in Brockville, and, for aught I know to the contrary, elsewhere, that my descriptions were exaggerated. Governor McTavish

<sup>1</sup> Mair's unfortunate letter to his brother led to his being appointed special correspondent to the *Globe*. In a series of articles, of which the above is one, he sought to obliterate the impression created by his private letter, and to answer the doubts cast on the agricultural possibilities of the North-West by the Hudson's Bay Company and the Roman Catholic missionaries.

may say so in Canada, but I defy him or anybody else to say so here. It is one thing to be the chief of a fur-trading monopoly and an enemy to Canadian extension. It is another thing to be a Canadian, with no personal interest to serve, but jealous for the prosperity of Canada, and anxious, like thousands of others, that something good and great may be made out for her. The condition at this moment of the hundred or so of Canadians in this country has some bearing upon these remarks. Having seen and conversed with many of them, and knowing their condition and prospects, I can speak decidedly upon this point. Many of them came here without money, and had to begin life without the usual aids and appliances of settled countries. In the midst of their labours a plague appeared, which ate up the fruits of their industry—but *they are not starving*. With the single exception of a respectable and decent man, who from disease was unable to work, not one of them during all the past winter accepted of relief from the Committee, and all others, including the industrious half-breeds themselves, who are really farmers, and not mere scratchers of a few acres of earth, are similarly situated.

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE RICHNESS OF THE SOIL.

Perhaps the most effective way to treat of this country is to divide it into sections—into which, indeed, it falls naturally—and describe the peculiar features of each succinctly and definitely. By this means the mind of the intending emigrant is attracted to a certain point, and, instead of vague impressions, he receives definite notions, and moves straight to the district which suits him. The good effect of this plan is evinced by the volume of correspondence received regarding the Oak Point section, treated of in a former letter ; and the present article, in which I endeavour to present to the reader the alluring and suggestive features of another and vaster district, clearly and truthfully, is based upon a similar plan. I think Canadians pretty well understand now, that the climate of this country is superior to their own. The further west one goes, this difference becomes more pronounced, and at a distance of 100 miles from here, and westward, humanity enjoys one of the finest climates in the world. Fevers are unknown. There are no indigenous malignant diseases, and to carelessness may be accredited most other ailments, aside from natural decay, which disturb man's comfort and happiness. So much for this matter. Another and most striking feature of this country is, the silent, swift, and mysterious topographic change



which is taking place on its surface. The whole country is being rapidly and evenly upheaved by the action of the earth's internal forces. Land which was marsh twenty years ago, is now arable and dry, and probably thousands of acres are added by this agency every year to the areas fit for cultivation.<sup>1</sup> There is no denying this fact. It is patent to the feeblest comprehension, and its bearing upon the future of this country is incalculably important. The whole territory may be compared to a vast but shallow basin, into the concavity of which has been poured, the riches of half the continent.

Minnesota—the highest land in America, east of the great rocky ridge, sending her waters to the Gulfs of Mexico and St. Lawrence and Hudson's Bay—has contributed her alluvium and retained her sand, and the mountains of the West have been denuded to enrich the valleys of the Assiniboine and Saskatchewan. Centuries of vegetable growth and decay have added to the fertility of the earth, and to-day the so-called Fertile Belt, and (it may now be safely asserted), the immense areas of the Peace River country, include the richest soils in America. There is still another and singular feature to mention, and that is the scarcity and smallness of the water-courses compared with the enormous extent of country drained. Extensive areas have no running water at all, though pure water can almost always be found by sinking, and small crooked streams, which would be called creeks in Canada, cut their way for twenty feet beneath the prairie level, and drain thousands of square miles of territory. The Assiniboine and the Saskatchewan are the only rivers worthy of the name in the Fertile Belt, and both are difficult of approach from the steepness and muddiness of their banks. The soil is so soft, and so largely taken up by the spring freshets, that for weeks the water in the Red and Assiniboine rivers is almost undrinkable, and so removable, again, that to dig a drain is to create a creek. An instance of this occurred at St. Boniface, directly opposite this, where a small drain was dug out to Red River, eighteen years ago, to let off some dead water behind the Mission. It is now a horrible looking affair, with a bridge about thirty feet wide, over which one might break one's neck. Indeed, if I mistake not, a man did break his neck, or his leg, I am not sure which, over it, not long since.

<sup>1</sup> There is evidence of the surface of central and northern Manitoba having risen since the weight of the great glacier was removed. But the phenomenon Mair refers to is more likely to be explained by prolonged dry weather from 1862 to 1868.



## PORTAGE LA PRAIRIE.

With these general remarks, we shall now take our trip to Portage La Prairie, ascending the left bank of the Assiniboine. The most forbidding portion of the route is in the neighbourhood of the village of Winnipeg, which stands on comparatively high ground, flanked on the left by Red River, and on the right by a series of extensive marshes, good for grazing, but worthless at present for farming. Low grounds lie westward along the road for several miles, though there are some fine farms even here, and, onwards, extends a sallow [sic] and comparatively meagre country, strewn with small boulders, until we reach Sturgeon Creek—a little pebbly stream, over which stands a miserable, rickety old mill, with an external undershot wheel. This is the only tributary of the Assiniboine for 75 miles, and above this point to Headingley, a distance of six miles, the soil is dense and stiff. This feature characterizes the country as we ascend to Lane's Post, twenty-five miles further on, and though it is all what would be called excellent farming land in Canada, and is covered with luxuriant grasses, it lacks sand to give it looseness. Over all this the road is beautiful ; and I may here say, once for all, that, with the exception of one or two wet places, the road to the Portage is magnificent. One may drive at the fastest trot over it, and will meet with exactly three stones on the way, and these are small ones and pleasant things to look at. The same road, or cart track, extends westward quite as good to Edmonton House, a distance of nearly one thousand miles, and three hundred miles after that to the mountains. Nature is the road maker here, and she has done her work admirably. Beyond Lane's Post for many miles, the ascent is gradual, but more noticeable, and the surface soil is characterized by eccentric alternations of loam, sand and clay. Throughout, the route on the left is bounded by the timber which lines the river, and, on the right, by near or far belts or clumps of woods—or by the horizon, into which vast expanses of prairie sweep and lose themselves. As we ascend, the country improves at every step, the right extent being relieved by the Big Ridge, as it is called—a long belt of timber, some three miles off, which stands on slightly elevated ground with a direction from west to east—and, as usual, by the timber belt along the river on the left. To Poplar Point, however, fifteen miles from Portage la Prairie, the route, though very fine and inviting, has little of the vastness peculiar to the upper country. There is an undefinable sense of narrowness and

constriction, due, doubtless, to the frequent occurrence of timber, with which the country is studded ; and, though the soil is in the main rich and productive, yet one grows exceedingly nice about soils in this country, and land which would be fought for in Canada is passed here with a leer and a scowl. It is at Poplar Point that the true, the virgin, the sublime prairie begins. There the awful solitude opens upon the sight and swells into an ocean, and the eye wanders over the " silent space " of the West. The man must be corrupt as death who, unaccustomed, can look unmoved upon this august material presence, this calm unutterable vastness. Man is a grasshopper here—a mere insect, making [his] way between the enormous discs of heaven and earth. And yet man is the master of all this. Hither will he come and plough, and plant, and reap, and pocket his greasy gains, and feel no awe of anything. Many things will he grumble about, doubtless, for man is an habitual grumbler ; but he will not complain much over his land.

#### HIGH BLUFF SETTLEMENT.

A rich loam deeply overspreads the bedded sand from this point to High Bluff, a Canadian settlement, about four miles from the Portage. A clump of trees, the reader will understand, is called a " bluff " in this country ; and High Bluff is a short strip of woods within the woods which line the river, and which rises prominently above the surrounding timber. There is a steam engine here, which works a saw mill and a grist mill alternately, but not as yet regularly—for the difficulties attending the construction have been great, and are not yet quite overcome by the owner, Mr. Holmes. The settlement consists of a number of Canadian families, who have bought out the original half-breed occupants, and who, I am happy to say, like all Canadians here, are prosperous and on the high road to independence. The soil over which we have been passing for many miles is all that the most avaricious man could desire ; but it is perhaps inferior to the soil further up, for a reason which will be stated hereafter. The lots are laid out—as are all lots in this country—in widths, with a river frontage, of from eight to fifteen chains, and a depth of two miles (a mischievous system, which must be remedied hereafter by the running of base lines and lateral sections),<sup>1</sup> the right of

<sup>1</sup> A revealing remark. The river lot survey was not convenient for extensive settlement in depth, but it was an integral part of the life of the Red River Settlement.

wood and [h]ay being, by regulation of the Council of Manitobah [sic],<sup>1</sup> common to all. The fences are substantial and neat ; but the houses—half-breed structures—are very small, though comfortable enough.

### SUCCESS OF THE CANADIAN FARMERS.

Half an hour's drive brings us to the Portage, a mixed settlement of half-breeds and Canadians, amongst whom the most substantial farmers are Mr. McLean and Mr. McBain.<sup>2</sup> The claims held by the Canadians were like those below, bought from the half-breeds at prices varying from £40 to £75 sterling, and lie fronting the "Island," as it is called, which enters into the more important descriptive matter to follow. Knowing that the grasshoppers were likely to be numerous last summer, they sowed no grain, and consequently saved their seed, but this year they will plant something like one hundred bushels of wheat each, and with an average yield will reap two thousand bushels of grain each farm. The principal market for this is the plain hunters, who all pass this way *en route* to the Saskatchewan, and they have no difficulty in obtaining five shillings currency per bushel. Mr. McLean, a most intelligent and obliging man, who accompanied me in subsequent examinations of the back country three years ago reaped three hundred bushels of wheat from six acres of land, and last year, though the grasshoppers were like scum on the earth, he planted with potatoes a patch of ground containing about two acres, so late as the 10th of July, and lifted in the fall one thousand bushels of as fine potatoes as I ever tasted. All these men keep large numbers of horses, which cost nothing for feed, as they winter out on the prairies; and large quantities of stock, whose food is easily procured in any quantity within a gun shot, and cut with the mower. Straw is either burned or left on the field as a winter protection for cattle. There is no other need of it ; and there is, consequently, no necessity for large barns, the grain being stacked and thrashed [sic] out in the fields. All the outfit of the farm is complete and excellent, from thrashing machines worth £150 sterling, down to double and single mould-board ploughs. They are plentifully supplied with poultry, and game is, of course, abundant.

<sup>1</sup> A local government set up by the settlers of the Portage as early as 1854. The best account of this "government" is in the *Globe*, February 19, 1869. It was formed because the Portage lay outside the District of Assiniboia.

<sup>2</sup> John McLean, who came to Portage la Prairie from Canada in 1862 ; and Kenneth McBain, who came from Canada in 1861, and had a son, Robert.



## FUEL SUPPLY.

Their wood they procure from the "Island" already referred to, or from the opposite bank of the Assiniboine, which is lined with an immense forest of oak and other woods, to a depth of eight or nine miles—enough to last thousands of settlers for years to come without the aid of coal, a good variety of which is found in abundance two or three days journey up the Assiniboine, and has been used by the blacksmiths at the Portage.<sup>1</sup> The question of fuel is, of course, a very serious and important one; and in a practical article like this it might be well to digress a little in order to discuss it. But as my next letter will be the promised one upon the drawbacks of this great country, I shall say no more about it at present.

## THE GOVERNMENT.

The Government under which this limited Settlement is peaceable and contented is a very simple piece of machinery indeed, consisting of three Councillors who make, administer, and execute the laws, a union of functions which they find to be on the whole rather troublesome, though it must be said, that so far the Councillors chosen have been sensible, intelligent men and have studied to do justice, forming a creditable contrast in this respect to the anarchy of the lower Settlement. This is the Government, if one can call it such, originally fostered by Archdeacon Cochrane and touched up by Mr. Thomas Spence.<sup>2</sup> It derives its powers from no legitimate source, but is merely the humble and spontaneous outgrowth of the sentiment of the people themselves. The Settlement, originally consisting of English half-breeds, was violently and ineffectually opposed by the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>3</sup> Now, however, the half-breeds are selling out to the Canadians, who laugh at any attempts at interference, and look upon the Company as a mere *bête noire* to be strangled as speedily as possible. None of the prairie lying back from the river frontage has been taken up as yet, though immense acres stretch in every direction, and invite the coming men.

[\*       \*       \*]

<sup>1</sup> An extravagant description of the lignite found along the Souris river.

<sup>2</sup> This is an accurate, if brief, description of the Council of Manitoba, of which Thomas Spence was president in 1868. (See note 2 on p. 284 and note 3 on p. 347.)

<sup>3</sup> Because it was feared, not without reason, that the settlement would be a base for free traders.



## CONCLUSION.

To conclude this article, the length of which is justified by its importance, it may be remarked that the magnificent country described is but the Portals of the measureless West, Portage la Prairie is the door, so to speak, the narrow entrance through which will flow the unspeakable blessings of free Government and civilization. It is here that the Canadian for the first time clearly recognizes the significance and inevitable grandeur of his country's future. Far behind him are his glorious old native Province, the unsullied freedom of the North, the generous and untiring breed of men. Before him stretches through immeasurable distance the large and lovelier Canada—the path of empire and the garden of the world.<sup>1</sup>

C. MAIR

IV: ABBÉ DUGAS<sup>2</sup> TO BISHOP TACHÉ, AUGUST 29, 1869.

[*From the original in Archives of Archbishopric of St. Boniface*].

[Translation]

Your Grace:

Politics become more and more interesting at Red River. I have already informed you of the arrival of that surveyor<sup>3</sup> who says that he is sent by the government to survey the lands: he has not begun so far, and I do not think he will begin. His project has set the country on fire. Last Monday he announced that he was going to begin his operations at Oak Point instead of beginning at Fort Garry as he had said at first. As soon as the news was known the people of Oak Point all came to warn him not to set foot in that neighbourhood if he wished to keep his head on his shoulders. They had already been intrigued beforehand by a band of those whom Snow had brought from Canada to work on the road, and who for some days seemed to be busier picking out land than working on the road. In the course of the week he has just received several other letters from different parts of the colony, giving him the same warning. The English down the river are still more excited than the *Métis*, and

<sup>1</sup> Here Mair strikes the authentic note of "Canada First", but characteristically identifies Canada with Upper Canada.

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend Georges Dugas was director of St. Boniface College, and with Father Lestanc kept Bishop Taché informed of events in Red River during the latter's absence in Canada and at Rome.

<sup>3</sup> Colonel J. S. Dennis, who arrived on August 20; see note 2 on p. 157.

wish, I am told, to drive out that surveyor along with Schultz who is the soul of the whole gang.

All this is becoming very serious. A trifle can to-day make trouble flare up, which will have the most disastrous consequences. The Canadian government in letting Upper Canada behave so is closing all ways to a settlement, and can say good-bye to Confederation from now and for some time to come. It is quite astonishing to see how little interest Lower Canada seems to have in Red River colony. Since one sees every day in the papers that the matter of Confederation between Red River and Canada is not yet concluded, why does the government permit these gangs of adventurers to come and spread disorder among our people?

The speedy arrival of Governor McDougall is announced ;<sup>1</sup> nobody wishes to receive him. People even go so far as to say that if he presents himself as sent by the Canadian government to rule the country, he will be advised to take the road back to Toronto promptly. Mr. McKenny [sic] is, we are told, at the head of this move for the English group.

At the palace Reverend Father Lestanc has forbidden all the fathers and priests to speak a word of politics before any one whatever for fear we should compromise ourselves. I saw Mr. Mager<sup>2</sup> this evening ; he told me that Messrs McKenney and Bannatyne had passed part of last night with the American consul: it is to be supposed that it was to discuss the state of the country. To-day surveyor Dennis has decided that he will begin his surveys at Pembina despite any prohibition.

This is the principal news that I have to give you to-day. There are very many other little things which are not so important.

I shall not fail to write to you on Tuesday.

Your blessing, My lord.

Your ever devoted servant,

G. DUGAS, PRIEST

P.S. We would not want these little troubles to upset your trip to Rome. In case affairs require your presence, we shall not fail to write to you. It is said the Governor<sup>3</sup> is fearful but I believe that there is no danger yet.

<sup>1</sup> The Honourable William McDougall was not appointed governor of the North-West Territories for another month, but the appointment was already a matter of discussion in the Canadian press.

<sup>2</sup> John, or Jean, Mager ; see note 1 on p. 281.

<sup>3</sup> Governor William Mactavish ; see note 1 on p. 162.

V: A LETTER FROM RED RIVER GIVING THE GROUNDS ON WHICH THE  
RESISTANCE WAS BEGUN.

[*Reprinted from the Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe, October 28, 1869*].<sup>1</sup>

[Translation]

St. Boniface, 6 Oct., 1869

Dear Mr. Editor,

You have a correspondent who keeps you well posted on all that is taking place at the present time in Red River<sup>2</sup>; but you will perhaps be glad to see a statement of the people themselves on what most concerns them at the moment.

For some time we have heard talk of what the general government of Confederation has in mind to do with respect to the North-West Territory. Last year Canada made certain arrangements with the Imperial Government with reference to this Territory. But these arrangements are not known to us. All that we know is, that there has been some question of sending us Mr. McDougall as governor. That gentleman was to come to us with a Council formed outside the country. We were, it is true, to have on the Council certain of our own people; but somewhat too few to be able to effect anything in the decisions of this Council.

Several newspapers of Upper and Lower Canada have freely published their views on what inconveniences might arise in the organization of such a government. And now that the Canadian people have heard these different discussions, would they not be glad to know what the people of Red River themselves think of all that. Here it is:

They do not appear to be at all ready to receive a Canadian governor. A Council chosen and constituted outside the country cannot hope, we

<sup>1</sup> Despite the lack of an authentic signature, this letter is included, because of its intrinsic interest as a statement not hitherto printed of the position of the insurgents, and also because of its relation to the Protestation of May 14, 1870 (see No. XXVI below). A partial translation of the terms of the protest embodied in the letter is amongst the Riel Papers in P.A.M., and the full text in English was published in the *New Nation*, April 22, 1870, with the remark that "It will be seen . . . that the motives of the Provisional Government from the first have been consistent."

The two *métis* may be conjectured to have been Louis Riel and John Bruce; the writer, Giroux.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is almost certainly to the Reverend L. R. Giroux, 1841-1911, a college friend of Riel's who came to Red River in 1868, and was priest at the Cathedral and Ste-Anne-des-Chênes, and chaplain to Riel's forces in Fort Garry. See Prud'homme, *Giroux*.

think, to see its decrees highly respected. One perhaps can judge by the demonstrations which the *métis* population of Red River has just made. Each parish has elected two representatives in order that they might pronounce in its name on the proceedings of the Canadian government with respect to the people of Red River, and the following are the resolutions that these representatives have passed in their first assembly:

1. These representatives declare in the name of the *métis* population of Red River that they are loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of England.<sup>1</sup>
2. These representatives acknowledge themselves, in the name of the *métis* population of Red River, beholden to the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company for the protection which they have received under the government of that Company whatever the nature of that government may have been.
3. The people of Red River having till now upheld and supported the government of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company, which has been established in the country by the Crown of England, the said representatives declare, in the name of the *métis* population of Red River, that Snow and Dennis have disregarded the law of nations in coming to carry out public work here in the name of an alien authority without paying any attention to the authority to-day existing in the country.
4. The Honourable Hudson's Bay Company being about to lay down the government of Red River, the said representatives declare, in the name of the *métis* population of Red River, that they are ready to submit to that change. But at the same time, being settled, working and living on the lands which they have assisted the [Hudson's Bay] Company [to open up, the people] of Red River, having acquired in the above manner [indisputable rights in that country,] the representatives of the *métis* population of Red River loudly proclaim those rights.<sup>2</sup>
5. The colony of Red River having always been subject to the Crown of

<sup>1</sup> Here is the key-note of the Red River Resistance, the formal and reiterated insistence that no rebellion was intended.

<sup>2</sup> The passages in square brackets were omitted in the *Courrier*; they have been supplied from the version—not a literal copy—of this protestation included in No. XXVI below.

The assertion of rights in the country is the fundamental motive of the Resistance.



England, and having developed in isolation, through all the hazards of its situation, the said representatives declare in the name of the *métis* population of Red River, that they will do everything necessary to have the privileges accorded so liberally by the Crown of England to every English colony respected on their behalf.

There, Mr. Editor, is what we would like to communicate to you. And those who take the liberty to send these things to you will not be the last to ensure that the rights of the people of Red River may be respected.

We have the honour to sign ourselves your very humble servants

TWO MÉTIS SETTLERS  
OF RED RIVER

VI : EXTRACT FROM PRIVATE LETTER OF GOVERNOR WILLIAM  
MACTAVISH ON THE BEGINNINGS OF THE RESISTANCE.

[*Printed from the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, A 12/45,*  
*ff. 310-12*].<sup>1</sup>

Oct. 13th [1869]. I had got so far when one of the leaders<sup>2</sup> in the movement against the survey was brought to speak to me and put my getting this off by the Mail out of the question besides knocking me up horribly for the remainder of the afternoon—it does not seem to have been of much use beyond confirming a previous suspicion that the Priests have somehow countenanced the movement, if so they are breaking up their own people, as I think the majority are against the movement. We are told by the last mail that Canada has brought the business of this Country to a fine point by putting down the money—If this is correct the rest of the story will soon be told. I am myself wondering how the HBC. will give notice to those, to whom they have given Commissions of the Peace and Councillors, that the authority under those commissions ceases to be. Some of the Councillors here afraid that they were to die without notice have required me to call a Council to decide on the way the new Governor and Government are to be welcomed, which evidently

<sup>1</sup> This extract, given as preserved in the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company, is printed for the interest of Governor Mactavish's private comments on the beginning of the Resistance.

<sup>2</sup> This was Louis Riel ; see C.S.P., 1870 (12), J. S. Dennis to McDougall, October 13, 1869.

points to the Council of Assiniboia drawing up an address to the Honble. W. McDougall. I have called the meeting but will not be able to preside myself but will take care to have it pointed out that the most dignified course for the Council will be to quietly await the day at which its authority ends and then for the Members, as private individuals to take any course as each may think best.

It is Archdeacon McLean<sup>1</sup> a busy body who commenced—and the joke is that a large section of the Settlement are very decided in their expression of dislike to the Canadian Government and there is certainly a petition to the Queen begging that the Government may be left in the hands of the Company or, if the Company will not continue to hold the trust, that the Queen will be pleased to name a Governor and send him out as the chief authority in the Country—yet parson McLean calls on the Council to welcome the Canadian rule[r] and the greater number of the Council have responded.

The Honble. Joseph Howe is here just now, a shrewd clear headed man—he very soon made out his whereabouts and steadily avoided Dr. Schultze's [sic] offers of accommodation &c &c he told me today that he was perfectly astonished to find the state of matters here and that without any means it was most wonderful how things have been kept together. He will be here for some time yet and I have no doubt from his own observations he will be able to set some of his colleagues right in their ideas about Red River.

Oct. 16th. I had hoped before closing to be able to say that the half breeds had withdrawn their objection to the surveys, but it is not so—they are getting more and more decided. I am still under the conviction that the Priests have something to do with it,<sup>2</sup> but of course I don't hint my suspicions and will not be likely to establish them at least till the half breeds are convinced they have made an error.

I am told Mr. McDougall left Ottawa some time ago and the papers have puffs about his bringing up a number of stands of arms—breech loaders—these people will never learn—it will be reported here that arms are coming and concluded that it is to force the half breeds to submit.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See note 2 on p. 175.

<sup>2</sup> The Governor was aware, it is to be presumed, of the active sympathies of the Reverend Georges Dugas, L. R. Giroux and J. N. Ritchot, and it may be that Riel betrayed the clerical coaching to which Dugas makes reference in *L'histoire véridique*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> In the hands, it was suspected, of Snow's and Dennis's men.

VII: SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE BY J. J. HARGRAVE IN THE *Montreal Herald* ON THE BEGINNING OF THE RESISTANCE.

[Reprinted from the *Montreal Herald*, November 27, 1869].<sup>1</sup>

Red River Settlement,  
British North America,  
6th November, 1869

The past week has been one of great excitement here, in consequence of the serious action taken by the parties opposed to the entrance of Lieut-Governor McDougall and his staff. The events connected with this movement will doubtless have reached Canada before this letter, but as the world outside the settlement cannot be expected fully to understand the motives or relative position of the parties implicated in the lawless proceedings of late occurrence, I shall endeavour to throw what light my observations on the spot enables me to collect upon what might appear to an outsider unintelligible.

The active opponents of the incoming Government are all of what is termed the "French half-breed" population. Their total number is about five thousand, of whom between six and eight hundred appear to be fighting men. In these numbers I include only the local population of the settlement at Red River,—but scattered up and down the territory of Rupert's Land there are great numbers of the same class, regarding the gross number of whom I possess no means of forming an idea.

The whole nation has its origin between the traders and servants, European and Canadian, of the Hudson's Bay Company, and the Indian women whom they have married. Born at the different trading posts in every part of the country, the children of these people have settled at Red River, and, while still largely supporting themselves by the buffalo

<sup>1</sup> This letter is one of a series by J. J. Hargrave, secretary of Governor Mactavish, and author of *Red River* (Montreal, 1871). In anticipation of the transfer, Hargrave had arranged with the *Herald* to publish a series of descriptive articles on the North-West: P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, copy of letter of J. J. Hargrave to Sir Curtis Lampson, February 8, 1870. This ran from October 21, 1869, to November 22, 1869, when the weekly articles became a narrative of the Resistance. All are entitled "Red River". The character of the series, however, changed when the troubles began, and it became a succession of reports on the Resistance by a close and understanding, if not sympathetic, observer; it is now known that Hargrave thought of publishing a supplement to his *Red River*, presumably to be made up of these articles.

hunts and other roving modes of life, have brought certain limited portions of land in the colony under rude cultivation.

As a class, they are quite [sic] and civil when not excited, but when roused are quite destitute of self control. Their honesty and trustworthiness are well known, their hospitality, more especially to each other, is great according to their means. Their extravagance is also, generally speaking, much observed, and their want of perseverance in sedentary pursuits is as remarkable as any of their characteristics.

They claim to be a nation, already, along with the English half-breeds, whom they claim as their brethren, in possession of this country, and entitled, under the Act of Confederation, to a voice similar to that conceded to the other Provinces respecting their entrance into the Confederation.<sup>1</sup> They have always claimed a commanding interest in the country, and are now indignant at the Hudson's Bay Company for not having more effectually protected their assumed rights at the period of the transfer to Canada.

The English half-breeds have altogether abstained from taking any part in the demonstrations now being made. They, however, will not actively oppose them, and profess no sentiments of loyalty whatever to the Canadian authorities. The entire population of Red River, in fact, with the exception of those now in arms, and a few Canadians lately arrived, are anxious only to preserve the tranquility of the colony, and destitute of any enthusiasm in the matter.

This state of matters would, however, I believe, be much modified in the event of bloodshed, even on a small scale. The disaffected are connected between each other and the English half-breed population by so many ties of kindred, race and friendship, that the death of any one would be revenged by further blood. The element of religion would also enter forcibly into the disturbance.

The interest of the French population in the opening up of the country to civilized life is, however, directly the reverse of the English interest. To the former, the cultivation of the prairies means the expulsion of the buffalo, which form their mainstay; the latter would merely feel the effects of increased competition in farming. Even, therefore, supposing considerable political influence to be conferred on the half-breeds as a class, those among them who would not obtain equal influence, as a matter of course among a settled population, would be compelled to make a

<sup>1</sup> The claim of the *métis* to be a "nation" long antedates the Resistance: see A. S. Morton, "The New Nation, The Metis," Trans. R.S.C., II, 1939.



radical change in their mode of life, or permanently leave the Settlement. In speaking of the different sections of the people, I, of course, describe them in bulk. There is a large section of the English half-breeds who will undoubtedly sink, through idleness and other causes, into a very low situation of society, while the French are not without men of intelligence and capability in various walks of life.

It has been reported of late with some degree of assurance, though I know not on what authority, that encouragement has been given to the half-breeds by parties resident in the settlement of Fenian proclivities. A considerable number of immigrants from the States also profess a strong sympathy with the project of Annexation. At present the half-breeds hold themselves aloof from both these parties, although, in the event of hostilities it is probable they might receive active aid from both.

I mentioned in a former letter that on the occurrence of events which gave a serious air to the disaffection of the half-breeds, the Council of Assiniboia held a meeting on the 25th ult., at which the two leaders of the party of action were present.<sup>1</sup> Attempts had previously been made by efforts at persuasion on the part of Governor MacTavish, and others, to induce these people to abandon their opposition to the Governor's entrance, and the Council of Assiniboia, on the occasion in question renewed these efforts with similar poverty of effect. Their arguments were useless.

The sense of the Council was then taken as to the course the authorities ought to pursue. It is understood outside that three courses were debated,—one was to arm a select band of loyally disposed French half-breeds, and send them to force their compatriots to give way. A second plan was to invite a counter demonstration on the part of all the loyal population, in order that an overpowering force of numbers might be drawn forth to go out to Pembina, unarmed, and escort Mr. McDougall in. The third proposition was, that Mr. McDougall should remain at Pembina until the force of persuasion, or the effect of the cold weather about to close in, might prevail on his opponents to break up their camp and disperse.

An attempt made forthwith by some of the French members of the Council to ascertain how many of that section would arm themselves, showed conclusively that not even twenty or thirty could be induced to do so, and that such a step would only result in ridicule.

<sup>1</sup> The letter of October 30, 1869, in the *Herald* for November 24, 1869.

The Minutes of the meeting of the Council of Assiniboia are printed in C.S.P., 1870 (12), and in Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 615-619.

The propriety of the second course was discussed and finally settled at the Council itself. It was agreed by all representative men at the Board that the great bulk of the Settlement was quite indifferent about Canadian rule, and the prevailing feeling was that, as the business had not yet practically come before them, they would decline to encounter danger at the hands of their fellow settlers in defence of a body of officials, in the appointment of whom they had no voice, and in support of a Government hitherto known to them only by report. Colonel Dennis, whose efforts to ascertain the true feeling of the people generally regarding this matter, have been skilful and unremitting, is understood to have agreed with the Council in its estimate of the popular feeling, and the propriety of calling for such general counter demonstration as that proposed.

The third course, by which Mr. McDougall should remain for some time at Pembina until public excitement should abate was therefore the only visible outlet of escape from the dilemma ; but as its adoption lay entirely with the Lieutenant-Governor himself, the present Council had, of course, no voice in the matter.

No direct communication had yet passed between the Government of Canada or Mr. McDougall, and the Governor of Rupert's Land or the Council of Assiniboine. It is, however, generally understood that such a communication was opened by the authorities here sending a despatch to meet Mr. McDougall on his arrival at Pembina, acquainting him with the demonstration in course of preparation by the half-breeds. Colonel Dennis himself started early on the morning of the 31st ultimo, intending to reach Pembina by a round-about route, by which he would escape the obstructions placed upon the usual line of travel.

On the evening of the 30th October, Mr. McDougall reached Pembina, and was immediately advised by the advanced guard of the half-breeds of the impossibility of his reaching Fort Garry. He is said to have remained at Pembina quite satisfied that advance were impossible for a time. The gentleman in charge of the Company's frontier trading post was instructed to assist him to the utmost of his power ; but the post of Pembina is one of the worst appointed stations in the country, and there is little doubt that under even the most favourable circumstances, Mr. McDougall and his party must experience much personal hardship.

Mr. Provencher, one of the incoming Councillors,<sup>1</sup> believing possibly

<sup>1</sup> J. A. N. Provencher, Secretary-designate of the Council of the North-West Territories ; see note 3 on p. 161.

that the obstacles to his progress might be less serious than was reported, proceeded on his journey, but after coming as far as the headquarters of the half-breeds at St. Norbert, he was forced to return to Pembina under armed escort.

Just as he was preparing to return, quite a commotion was excited at the barrier by the arrival of Captain Cameron, R.A.,<sup>1</sup> who, seeing only the regular guard of fifty men at the barricade, determined to carry it by assault, single-handed. It is reported to be only two or three feet high, and the Captain, urging the magnificent black horses which he drove to a gallop, was heard to make some remarks about "being accustomed to such matters." Luckily he did not succeed in forcing his way through the barricade, but, after driving over an insurgent, his horses were seized by the others and brought to a halt without bloodshed. Meanwhile the mass of the disaffected, numbering perhaps five hundred armed men, who had been engaged at the moment at a little distance, in seeing Mr. Provencher commence his return journey, hearing a disturbance at the barricade, rushed forward in great excitement, believing Mr. McDougall to have arrived. Captain Cameron requested permission to enter the settlement for supplies, promising, if necessary, to return as soon as he could get them, but he was peremptorily refused, and compelled to return to Pembina with Mr. Provencher under armed escort.

Such is the account I have received of the details of this attempt to force a way through the barricade. I believe the facts to be substantially true. It will, at least, show what people say here. Had Captain Cameron once passed the barrier, he surely would have been shot.

On the 2nd inst, an armed party of one hundred of the insurgents came to Fort Garry, of which they have since held possession. Armed sentries stand at the gates and patrol the platform. They scrupulously, however, respect property, and have forcibly stopped the sale of liquor both in the Fort and the village of Winnipeg. Parties entering and leaving the Fort when unknown to the sentries, are questioned, and the watch is maintained day and night, the guard being regularly relieved at stated hours.

Outgoing and incoming mails are detained and subjected to examination at St. Norbert.

The organization formed by the insurgents is called the "Republic of the half-breeds,"<sup>2</sup> and is governed by a Council. A form

<sup>1</sup> See note 3 on p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Only popularly ; the word republic was never used by Riel and his followers to describe their government.



has been gone through, which professes to be a "Proclamation of Independence."<sup>1</sup>

It is generally expected that movements will take place, to enable the inhabitants of the colony, generally, to concur with the French population in the formation of a temporary government.<sup>2</sup>

VIII: LOUIS RIEL'S NOTES OF THE SESSIONS OF THE NOVEMBER CONVENTION OF ENGLISH AND FRENCH, NOVEMBER 16 TO DECEMBER 1, 1869.

[*Printed from manuscript in Riel's hand in the Riel Papers, P.A.M.*].<sup>3</sup>

[Translation]

Fort Garry, Convention of November 16, 1869.

The English representatives are greeted on their arrival by a salute of a dozen guns for them and a dozen for the French.

Bruce, President<sup>4</sup>

Riel, Secretary

The English express their dissatisfaction with these joyous demonstrations of gunfire. They protest to a man against this display of military force—The French are more light-hearted and explain to them that they have no hostile intention toward their English compatriots.

The English require a fresh election of a president and a secretary. The French say that they are ready to proceed with one as soon as by a frank and cordial understanding the representatives of the two sections of the population or at least the Majority, should agree on a line of conduct to follow in the existing circumstances. That for that purpose it is important the representatives of both languages without delay put before the assembly the instructions they have received orally or otherwise from their constituents. That there is need that the true intentions of the two sections of the Population should be fully known and understood

<sup>1</sup> What this was is a matter of conjecture ; probably Hargrave had heard of the protestation of October 6. See above, No. v.

<sup>2</sup> The formation of a provisional government had been discussed in the Settlement for some time.

<sup>3</sup> This account of the debates in the convention of November was written by Riel during the convention. The document reproduced seems to be a copy of his notes, as the script is not hurried.

<sup>4</sup> John Bruce, first president of the Provisional Government ; see note 3 on p. 163.



to establish in what they were alike and in what opposed, in what understanding was possible.

The English say that they protest against the taking up of arms by the French, against their seizure of the Fort, against their illegal opposition to the entrance of Mr. McDougall, sent by the Queen.

The French say that it has always been their custom to take up arms to repel all who approached the portals of the Colony with adverse intent. As the Indian war parties have been repulsed so Mr. McDougall will be. He too is to be feared, because already for some time it has been heard said that he is going to come to govern us, that the Company has sold the rights of government here. And yet neither England nor the Company has warned us of this and Mr. McDougall has in fact made entry into the colony. Having been repelled, he is still there just over the line, wearing us down, trying to establish himself here as our master, declaring himself already our master, without our authorities having told us that he is. My dear fellow citizens, because of our attachment to British institutions which we respect as you do, let us not wait together until our liberties pass to alien power, let us not wait to claim them, until they may be in other hands, etc.—The English seemed to be impressed.

Hargrave<sup>1</sup> knocks at the door, asks to speak, he bears a communication from Governor McTavish. The English wish it to be read immediately. Riel says that it would be better to wait until the convention had done what it had to do, before concerning itself with what the Company had to say to us. Animated discussion. Finally we are to read that communication at the end of the present session.

Ross.<sup>2</sup>—What cause led you to take the Fort? Riel.—To preserve it for the inhabitants of the country and in order that McDougall with his strangers should not come and establish himself there as absolute master. Ross.—The means you have taken to arrive at your end are unconstitutional—The Queen conferred authority on Mr. McDougall at pleasure—All loyal subjects have only to obey. Riel.—Let Mr. McDougall show his authorization! We have never refused to obey the Queen of England. Ross.—Mr. McTavish is still the representative of the Queen. You occupy the Fort in spite of him. Riel.—I do not know whether our occupation of the Fort is very disagreeable to him.—Ross indignantly, Mr. McTavish is a worthy representative of the Queen. Riel.—We think so still. Ross. Well, then, if he is so, as it is a little late and time for us to think of adjourning, I demand that the

<sup>1</sup> J. J. Hargrave ; see note 1 on p. 167.

<sup>2</sup> James Ross ; see note 3 on p. 164.

communication which has been sent you by Mr. W. McTavish be read now. Mr. Riel will make no objection, I presume, because of what he has just said. Mr. Lowman<sup>1</sup> seconds the motion, and Mr. McKenny<sup>2</sup> is requested to read to the convention what Mr. McTavish has sent to it.

After having heard the reading of the Proclamation of Mr. W. McTavish,—Ross says : I am sure that our French compatriots will obey now that the will of the governor is known and that he orders them in his capacity as governor to leave the Fort. I hope that they are going to do it for their own benefit and the satisfaction of their relatives and friends the English of the colony.—There is silence.—Ross rises and says that he awaits with confidence the evacuation of the Fort by the French of the colony. Riel:—Not yet.—Ross,—You can no longer protest ignorance.—Riel,—A Proclamation, however emphatic, still does not remove what is just in our pretensions.—Ross,—Your acts are now acts of rebellion.—Riel,—If we rebel against the Company which sold us and against Canada which wishes to buy us, we do not rebel against the English government, which has not yet given its approval to the actual transfer of the country. What! We recognize the government of Assiniboia so far as it exists—(laughter).—Ross,—you make a pretence of recognizing it.—Riel, turning to the French.—Do we indeed only pretend to recognize it? Come, speak.—All,—no! no! Moreover, we are faithful to our native land. We shall protect it against the dangers which menace it. We wish that the people of Red River be a free people. Let us help one another. We are all brothers and kindred, says Mr. Ross, and it is true. Let us not separate. See what Mr. McTavish [says]. He says that from this assembly and from the decisions of this assembly can come an inestimable good.<sup>3</sup> Let us unite. The evil that is feared will not take place. See how he speaks. Is it surprising? His children are of mixed blood like ourselves. Adjournment.

I cannot very well write and take note of the discussion seeing that I am obliged to speak all the time. The retorts are longer. The replies are

<sup>1</sup> Maurice Lowman ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Henry McKenny ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> The words of the Proclamation are : " You are dealing with a crisis out of which may come incalculable good or immeasurable evil, and with all the weight of my official authority, and all the influence of my individual opinion, let me finally charge you to adopt only such means as are lawful and constitutional, rational and safe." Riel, shaken by the Proclamation, and Ross's forcing home of its effect, has cleverly turned the sentence to his own purposes.

not always so concise. But what I have written is always the sense and almost always the terms of what was said in French.

November 17, 1869. The convention meets. The members appear to get on well together. The English ask, what do you mean to do? Ross speaks most often. Riel replies that the wish of the French is to do what the people of the Settlement wish to do. That the present stand of the French shows pretty clearly what they wish. That the coming of the English to the convention seems to show that they are not unfavourable to the idea of joint action. The French ask, to what extent are the English ready to go along with them? The English reply that their way of seeing the thing is to let Mr. McDougall come in without opposition and once he is settled down, their intention is to ask of him what they wish and if Mr. McDougall will not or cannot grant what they ask, then they too will send him back. There will be time to do it. The French say that if McDougall is once settled in, nothing will get rid of him. That McDougall, as governor, will have all kinds of official papers to show them in the name of the Queen and that as a matter of fact it would be really an act of rebellion to try to turn him out when he had established himself and that the British government, learning of his peaceful entry before it knew our just demands precisely, would conclude that the transfer had been agreed to. But the British government not having yet ratified the conditions on which the transfer would be effected, McDougall has nothing official to offer us at the present time. Now is the time to raise our feeble voice in order that across the barriers which would hinder them reaching our Queen we can make ourselves heard soon enough.

Then Mr. Ross recounts all that he had recommended to Mr. McDougall before leaving Ontario. He says that he has made him see, himself, that his government and the measures that he would no doubt take to open up the country and to bring about its settlement as quickly as possible might be somewhat harmful to the present colonists who were settled in the country and had lived and worked there for a long time without having taken the precautions of which they none the less had need to preserve unimpaired their rights and privileges, while coming under a change of government, a government composed of people more interested in advancing the interests of a large number of immigrants than the interests of the first settlers. That in face of all that, he, Mr. Ross, a son of this country, devoted to his fellow-countrymen, prefers to silence these fears for the moment, and to do all that he could to have such a one as Mr. McDougall enter; because, he says, I foresee that in



preventing him from entering we shall draw down on the colony misfortunes such as it has never known. He makes a fine speech that I shall not write down, having to listen in order to reply to him. (I do not write quickly enough.)

Riel underlines the nobility in the remonstrances that Mr. Ross has made to Mr. McDougall in Ontario, the justness of his fears on the subject of the interests of the first settlers who are his ancestors, his brothers, his kin, his friends. That this stand that Mr. Ross had taken before has indeed been inspired by love for his country, and now that he sees half of his country take the same stand, with the other half less resolved to maintain their rights for all they are worth and that its intention is to appeal to Mr. McDougall to treat them more as British subjects, when all the colony affirms that Mr. McDougall should not come in except with their free consent and a guarantee of their rights, how is it that Mr. Ross finds himself intimidated? Rather than hindering us from offering an energetic resistance to him (McDougall), why does he not allow himself to speak with his eloquent voice in the name of the love which he bears to the country of his birth, invoking as we do the union of all the settlers of the colony, invoking that union which can save us, in order that in these days of profound unrest the people should confront Mr. McDougall, beseeching him in the name of justice, in the name of the Queen, to respect a British colony, not to seek ambitiously to govern our country before having put us in possession of those precious rights that the Crown of England grants so freely to all its subjects. Mr. Ross, speak up for your country, do not seek to silence it. With your learning, your gifts, say to our English fellow-countrymen that Mr. McDougall is not yet our governor<sup>1</sup>; that a frightful snare is spread before us, in leaving us to say that our mode of action will be more loyal, if we should only consider dismissing Mr. McDougall were he to decline to recognize all our rights after having become our master.

Adjournment until November 22 to allow the General Court a place to sit :<sup>2</sup> Do we not by that act recognize the government of Assiniboia?

November 22. The convention meets. Mr. Ross raises the question of the gains which would flow from our entry into the confederation, gains which would be considerable for us and important for the accomplishment of the design of confederation. The union of this vast

<sup>1</sup> Not all the English would, like Ross, understand French.

<sup>2</sup> The session of the General Court which tried Thomas Scott *et al.* for assault on Snow.



country to Canada is necessary to the dearest interests of British North America. The Queen approves the Canadian Confederation as it has been constituted. We are, *as it were, the key stone of the arch of that grand undertaking*. Riel replies that all that Mr. Ross has just said is accurate and has our full agreement. But if this country is beyond question of high importance for the completion of the Canadian confederation, why not put it at once on such a footing that the settlers here may go on living prosperously in this country and that outsiders coming here to live may find institutions all ready to make them happy by bestowing on them those liberties which all America likes to see its children enjoy without distinction. There is the substance of two long speeches which Ross and Riel made. Gunn<sup>1</sup> rises, complains of the loss of time that we incur in not coming to an understanding. He asks the French to lay down their arms, in order that the two sections of the colony may speak on an even footing. He urges vigorously that Mr. McDougall be allowed to come in in order that we may lay our complaints before him and receive satisfaction.

Riel replies that by laying down our arms, we open our doors altogether too wide to those whom we ought not to allow to invade us ; and that McDougall shall not enter.

1869. November 23. The Convention meets.

Continuation of the same subject : lay down your arms ; let Mr. McDougall in, say the English. The French are unwilling. The English insist on the idea that a strong government is necessary ; that because of that, the Canadian government is a necessity for us. The French declare that they need a strong government, because that of Assiniboia has really shown itself to be extremely weak in recent years. The General Court this term was not able to conclude its business properly for want of power to obtain jurors. That in consequence, it is time that the inhabitants of the colony considered the formation of a provisional government for their own protection and to treat with Canada, and force it to grant us a form of responsible government. That the giving up of the rights of government of the Hudson's Bay Company which has sold out without even saying a word about it, shows us only too harshly how much an irresponsible government makes mock of its subjects for us not to profit by the lesson. Ross speaks of the possibility of a military expedition against us, if we do not act with moderation. Riel says that winter will protect us with its snows and storms. That Hudson Bay,

<sup>1</sup> Donald Gunn ; see note 1 on p. 166.

Thunder Bay, and the American territory are not easy barriers to break in order to reach us here in the spring. That we have six months before us and that during that time we shall have a settlement with Canada. Adjournment, no understanding, little hope of one. Schultz and the "Canadas"<sup>1</sup> are raising the devil.

November 24, 1869. Before entering the session :  
We French have passed the night in council. I have spoken during a whole seven hours to bring the National Committee to form itself into a Provisional Government. Not one was ready. What fears and hesitations there were to overcome. It is incredible what misgivings I had to overcome in them. That which they feared the most was the appearance of a rebellion against the Queen. It is only by force of demonstrating to them and saying to them that we remain faithful to the Queen ; that the government of Assiniboia in selling itself has so weakened itself that it no longer had the strength necessary to protect us ; that if there remained in it still anything of the nature of a government, it is only the name. That it concerns itself so little with us that in spite of the outcries and all that we had done to repel McDougall, if the Government of Assiniboia made contact with McDougall, it would put us willy nilly in his hands. That if the Queen knew what we wanted, she would listen to us. That she knows perhaps already and that she will listen to us without a doubt. That moreover McDougall is preparing to complete all his arrangements with the Council of Assiniboia for the first of December. That on his (McDougall's) declaring himself governor on that day, the government of Assiniboia is finished. It has therefore only a few days to run in a state of perfect incapacity. That since McDougall does not wish to speak with us, as our letter of October 21<sup>2</sup> told him he could address us, in order to have permission to enter the country, let us not allow him to become governor before the matter is settled with us in the name of Canada. If he declares himself governor on December 1, he will be no more governor than before. Assiniboia will be dead, let us form a Provisional Government beforehand. Let us speak

<sup>1</sup> The "Canadas", the term by which the *métis* described the members of the Canadian party and the recent immigrants from Ontario.

<sup>2</sup> The letter of October 21 was the warning to McDougall, signed by Bruce and Riel, not to enter the North-West Territory "without special permission of the Committee". Riel implies that McDougall might have asked, and been granted, permission to enter.

about it to-morrow to the English representatives. Let us seize the public accounts, the public funds in order to force McDougall to deal with a public body. Those books and that public money also belong to the public. McDougall must not take possession of them in spite of us. The members of the Committee consent at last, and I advise them that to run less risk, we shall proclaim the formation of the Provisional only after December 1.<sup>1</sup> That it was Schultz and the Canadian disturbers of the peace who . . . [?] *as much as the incapacity of the Council of Assiniboia* compelled us together with the conduct of McDougall to take extreme measures which would recoil upon them.

The Convention meets. The English ask the French what their plans are. Riel asks the English if it is really their desire to unite with the French to overcome the present difficulties. An evasive reply from the English. Riel answers them saying: You will know indeed what we want, on our side. We want what all the French parishes want. And they want to form a provisional government for our protection and to treat with Canada. We invite you to join with us sincerely. That government will be composed equally of French and English. It will be only Provisional. The English say that they must consult their respective parishes. That their instructions do not authorize them to take such action. Adjournment until December 1, 1869.

December 1. The French wait for the English who are in Winnipeg and do not wish to come. Finally, Bannatyne<sup>2</sup> comes saying that he brings the Queen's Proclamation. Riel examines the document and says laughing that it indeed looks very like one. Handing back the poster to Mr. Bannatyne, he says to him, *Take that big sheet* (pronouncing the double "e" very short). My friends, if it is the Queen's Proclamation, pay attention. Let us weigh our acts before acting. It is more than ever necessary for us to be prudent in the vindication of our rights, so dear and so certain—some time after that the English deputies come looking wan and yet a little more cheerful than usual. Riel: If Mr. McDougall is really our governor to-day, our chances are better than ever. He has no more to do than prove to us his desire to treat us well. If he guarantees our rights, I am one of those who will go to meet him in order to escort him as far as the seat of his government. Finally Ross says, what will we ask of him? A period of disorderly discussion follows, and the French

<sup>1</sup> This passage explains why the inception of the provisional government, proclaimed on December 8, was dated from November 24.

<sup>2</sup> A. G. B. Bannatyne; see note 4 on p. 162.

ask for two hours in which to formulate what they have in mind. Adjournment until six o'clock p.m.

At 6 o'clock p.m. the members of the convention reassemble. Our bill of rights is discussed. All the propositions are accepted by the English on the ground that since they are things so little contrary to their views, it costs nothing to present them to Mr. McDougall with whom a settlement might be obtained, perhaps on the strength of his commission, perhaps by an act of the Canadian Parliament. The proposition of sending delegates to Mr. McDougall is advanced, but in this the English all refused to participate. Riel rises and speaks hotly. Go, he says, return peacefully to your farms. Rest in the arms of your wives. Give that example to your children. But watch us act. We are going to work and obtain the guarantee of our rights and of yours. You will come to share them in the end.

The Convention of 40 Delegates held at Fort Garry in January-February, 1870, was convoked by the Provisional Government and its task was defined by that government.<sup>1</sup>

At the end of the mass meeting which had taken place at Fort Garry on January 20, 1870, the President of the Provisional Government moved, seconded by Mr. Bannatyne, that 20 English representatives should be elected to meet 20 other French representatives on January 25 at noon, in the Court House, in order to examine the commission of Mr. D. A. Smith and see what was best to do on that subject. (See Begg 238.)

When the convention met, Riel moved that Judge Black be elected. (See Begg 248.)

Then the convention indicated to Messrs. the Canadian Commission its acceptance of the invitation they had proffered to the people of Red River to send Delegates to Ottawa ; the convention wished to go farther and nominate the delegation itself. But the President of the Provisional Government stopped the convention there, demonstrating to it that it had only to recognize, in the name of the still recalcitrant part of the population, the Provisional Government proclaimed on December 8, 1869, and then finish its organization as soon as possible. Riel ended by being recognized as President of the government of the whole country. (See Begg 268.)

<sup>1</sup> These notes on the Convention of Forty are also in the Riel Papers in P.A.M. as part of the record of the November convention.



Of the 20 English  
representatives 12  
voted for the  
Provisional  
Government  
presided over by  
Riel.

Thomas Bunn  
Dr. Bird  
John Sutherland  
John Fraser  
Judge Black  
Donald Gunn  
James Ross  
George Flett  
Robert Tait  
W. Lonsdale  
George Gunn  
Alfred H. Scott

voted with the 20  
French representatives  
for Riel. John Taylor  
took part in the  
convention of which  
he was member for  
Headingley and went  
during the last days  
of the convention to  
plot at Headingley with  
the hundred men  
from Portage whom  
Boulton commanded  
and that

Thomas Scott had contributed most to organize against the Provisional Government.

Then a motion having been passed unanimously by the convention thanking Judge Black for the manner in which he had presided, the convention requested him to yield the chair to the President of the Provisional Government, which was done. Riel then, at once, nominated Judge Black, Reverend Mr. Ritchot and Mr. A. H. Scott Delegates to go to Ottawa, and on February 12 Mr. Thos. Bunn Secretary of State under the Provisional Government wrote to each nominated Delegate.<sup>1</sup>

Sir,

I am instructed to inform you that you have been appointed by the President of the North-West Territories as commissioner with Messrs. .... to treat with the government of the Dominion of Canada on the conditions of our entry into the confederation.

I am, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
Thos. Bunn,  
Secretary of State

<sup>1</sup> The point is that Riel is insisting that the delegates were delegates of the Provisional Government, not delegates of the people of the North-west appointed by the Convention ; hence reception of the delegates would be tantamount to recognition of the Provisional Government. The facts were that the Convention, with much reluctance on the part of the majority of English delegates, approved the Provisional Government with Riel as its head, and then Riel nominated the delegates who were approved, after some dissent to Alfred H. Scott's nomination, by the Convention. *New Nation*, February 18, 1870.

See Begg, 323, 324, 325, 326.

In referring frequently to Begg<sup>1</sup> for certain facts, I ought to remark that that author is not suspect, he is incomplete : he alters facts and mutilates them so that he may spare his own people humiliation and lower the merit of the French.

IX: FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE BY J. J. HARGRAVE IN THE *Montreal Herald* ON THE BEGINNING OF THE RESISTANCE.

[*Reprinted from the Montreal Herald, December 13, 1869*].<sup>2</sup>

Fort Garry,  
Red River Settlement,  
20th Nov., 1869

In my last week's letter, I mentioned that the errors of the Canadian Government, in its present dealings with the North West Territory, are considered to be two-fold, and to originate, first, in the premature mission of surveyors and road markers ; and secondly, in neglecting to open direct communication with the present Government. I adduced the fact corroborative of my first assertion, and beg now to continue the subject, by showing how the hands of the existing authorities have been tied through the non-existence of official intercourse.

Mr. Snow, on his arrival in autumn, 1868, brought with him the intimation on the part of his employers, of a hope that no molestation would be offered him in his road operations, and he forthwith went to work across a tract of country, still the property of the Indians, and in those portions of it at a greater distance than fifty miles from Fort Garry, beyond the civil jurisdiction of the magistrate of Assiniboia. He met with many troubles on all hands. Indians required compensation. Half-breeds who had settled at a place called Oak Point, at the western terminus of his road, declared their squatter rights had been invaded by self-appropriations of land made by people more or less directly connected with the works. Bad feelings broke out, which resulted in applications to quell tumults among the half-breeds being made to the authorities at Fort Garry, and on one occasion the Red River Magistrates were pained in having to adjudicate in an action brought against Mr. Snow of liquorselling [sic] to Indians—the offences consisting I believe in a dram

<sup>1</sup> *The Creation of Manitoba.*

<sup>2</sup> Cf. No. VII above.

having been given to a Chief who had made a call on New Year's day. In all such matters Mr. Snow was treated as a private individual by the authorities, though his real position was known and appreciated by the half-breeds. I regret to have to add that the feelings of the latter towards him were not soothed by the circumstance that the individuals with whom he and his party maintained the closest apparent connection,<sup>1</sup> had frequently called down upon themselves the hostility of the French population, and were professedly hostile to the existing Government of which, until the occurrence of the present disturbances the French have been steady supporters.

Early in June immigrants arrived in successive parties from Canada. Some of these people having settled at a place named Muskrat Creek,<sup>2</sup> seventy or eighty miles west from Fort Garry, were peremptorily warned off by Indians, who objected to the further settlement of their lands. Muskrat Creek is in the opposite direction, as regards Fort Garry, from the theatre of Mr. Snow's experiences of the previous winter. The new arrivals complained to the authorities that they had exhausted their means in coming to the Settlement, and were unable to return. If not permitted to farm, therefore, they would be in a very awkward predicament.

A Councillor in Assiniboia, of very great experience and influence in dealing with the Indians, repaired to Muskrat Creek, and after some difficulty made such representations of the hardships of the case to the Indians as induced them to consent to the temporary occupation of the lands by these settlers.<sup>3</sup> The point was not, however, conceded without considerable difficulty, the only assurance which the authorities could give being, that the occupation of the lands would in no way prejudice the title of the Indians to compensation, which would probably be made by the Canadian Government as soon as possible after the contemplated transfer had taken effect. Respecting the general scheme of Indian policy contemplated by the Dominion Government, no reliable information could be given.

The recent interruption to the operations of Colonel Dennis' Surveyors, and the outrages offered to Governor McDougall and others, have filled up the measure of the difficulties of the directors of the old order of things.

<sup>1</sup> That is, Schultz and the Canadian party.

<sup>2</sup> The present Rat Creek, some miles west of Portage la Prairie.

<sup>3</sup> James McKay made this temporary arrangement; see the *Globe*, September 4, 1869, where the "Treaty" is reproduced.

The French half-breeds demand from the Local Government an explanation of the measures taken with regard to the country they call their own by the Dominion of Canada. What private information may be in the possession of the Governor and Council has been communicated to them, but of responsible assurance they have yet had none. The fact that the actual Government has been practically ignored has contributed to the maintenance of a feeling of apathy towards coming events in the minds of the English-speaking population, who, however, wait only an authoritative and reliable exposition of their rights and duties, to demand the one and perform the other. They object to the measures taken by the French on account of their violent and illegal character, but they feel the necessity of having an explanation on many points from the Dominion Government, and believe that such a communication ought long ago to have been made through the Governor and Council of Assiniboia or the Governor of Rupert's Land.

Such being the relative position of parties here, it will be seen that the occurrence of some demonstration, at least of coldness of feeling towards the incoming Governor, was an event which might have been anticipated. In fact so great have been the misrepresentations made through the press of late years respecting the condition, sentiments, and Government of the Red River people that the amount of reliable information regarding the latter in the possession of the inhabitants of the eastern provinces, is about as small as that regarding the intentions of the Canadian Government now in possession of the Red River people. It was much desired and fully expected that the recent unofficial visit of Mr. Howe would be productive of good effects in opening the eyes of the Canadian Government through the personal observation of one of their foremost men to a great many things hitherto habitually misrepresented by the professed friends of the Dominion. There is every reason to believe that the information collected by Mr. Howe was sound ; but, at the time of his departure, shortly as that was before the date at which the advent of the Lieutenant Governor was expected, the disturbances which have prevented his approach to the Colony were altogether unanticipated, and the possibility of such movements discredited.

Throughout the Autumn, reports were in circulation of movements among the French half-breeds, and Sunday public meetings were held by that section of the people which ended apparently in no practical result. The main movers in these preliminary acts have indeed been among the opponents of the present demonstration, which appears to



have been in train, silently developing itself since the month of July.

On 21st October, the Settlement was taken by surprise on hearing that the French had taken possession of the highways at St. Norbert, nine miles south from Fort Garry, and were subjecting outgoers and incomers to a rigid search. The previous interruption offered to the surveying party of Col. Dennis had not been generally received as evidence of any comprehensive line of action. The authorities here did their utmost by personal intreaty and attempts at persuasion, to divert the recognized leaders of the movement from their purpose, but the effort was vain, and the road to Pembina remained guarded day and night, while armed bands were placed at intervals all the way to Pembina, in order that immediate intelligence of the arrival of Mr. McDougall at the latter place might reach head quarters at St. Norbert.

The insurgents had represented themselves as being constituted into a corporate body, called the " Republic of the Half-Breeds," the President of which was a man named John Brousse [sic], and the Secretary Louis Riel. On 25th October a meeting of the Governor and Council of Assiniboine was convened, before which these people attended. Renewed attempts were made by the Council to dissuade them from their course—but all were unavailing. The Council finding itself much embarrassed through the position in which it was placed, being till then practically ignored by the Dominion Government, and subsequently defied by the half-breeds, opened a correspondence with the incoming Governor through the Governor of Ruperts Land, who forwarded a communication to be handed to Mr. McDougall on his arrival at Pembina, acquainting him with the serious complications which had arisen here. Attempts to move the half-breeds from their resolution were persevered in through the agency of members of Council belonging to their own class, but still without effect. The Roman Catholic Priesthood, as a body, refused to interfere; but the parish priest of St. Norbert openly countenanced the insurgents.<sup>1</sup>

On the 30th October Mr. McDougall reached Pembina, whence, on learning the impending troubles, his family and servants returned to winter, I believe, at St. Cloud.<sup>2</sup> The Lieutenant Governor took up his residence at the Hudson's Bay Post, a short distance north from the frontier. The advance guard of half-breeds immediately handed him a

<sup>1</sup> The Reverend J. N. Ritchot.

<sup>2</sup> This was not so; the whole party remained at Pembina.

letter from their leaders. Mr. Provencher and Captain Cameron advanced towards the Settlement, but were forced to retrace their steps under armed escort after penetrating as far as St. Norbert. Colonel Dennis, as the date of Mr. McDougall's expected arrival drew near, had gone by a round about route to Pembina, where he still remains.

On the afternoon of 2nd November, Mr. McDougall was warned by an armed party of half-breeds, which entered the Company's post at Pembina, that he and his party must retire beyond the International line and quit the territory. He produced his commission and explained its items ; but was informed in reply that, by order of the Government they had established, he must withdraw. On the morning of 3rd November Mr. McDougall was abruptly warned that delay on his part protracted beyond 9 o'clock might occasion bloodshed, as the half-breeds declared their orders to be positive that he should be beyond the line at that hour. Without waiting for breakfast he and his party therefore left the post, and were escorted by the half-breeds to the frontier, which they were warned not to re-pass. The Governor is accordingly encamped on American ground a short distance south from the International Boundary Line. Col. Dennis, Captain Cameron, Atty. Gen. Richards,<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Provencher continue to remain with him.

Meanwhile on 2nd November a party of about 120 armed men, detached from the main body at St. Norbert, marched into Fort Garry, of which they took possession, posting sentinels at the gates and on certain platforms. Demands were made for provisions, at first to a very limited amount, payment being promised on the part of the so-called Republic.

It was at first imagined that the capture of Fort Garry was merely a feint contrived to mask the further design of an attack on the village of Winnipeg, in which reside a number of people personally obnoxious to the French. The latter, however, denied any such anterior design, and alleged they merely wished to protect Fort Garry by their presence against an impending danger, the nature of which they declined to explain. From 120, their number was afterwards reduced to about sixty, who are relieved at intervals.

The outgoing and incoming mails were repeatedly detained and examined, though no letters were ultimately seized. A considerable quantity of goods have also been detained at St. Norbert, and it is yet doubtful when they may be released. The Government stores of guns and ammunition, a considerable quantity of which have been kept in

<sup>1</sup> A. N. Richards ; see note 2 on p. 176.

store at Fort Garry since the departure of the Canadian Rifles in 1861,<sup>1</sup> have been seized and distributed among the insurgents.

I mentioned in my last week's letter that an invitation had been issued by the French to the English parishes requesting that delegates should be sent to meet the former at a public meeting to be held in the Courtroom, near Fort Garry, on the 16th instant. The following delegates were returned by the various parishes:—St. Johns, Morris E. G. Soloman ;<sup>2</sup> St. Margaret's, none ; Headingley, Wm. Tait ; St. James, Robt. Tait ; St. Mary's, John Garrioch ; Kildonan, James Ross ; St. Paul's, Dr. C. J. Bird ; St. Andrew's, Donald Gunn ; St. Clement's, Thomas Bunn ; St. Peter's, Henry Prince ; Winnipeg, 1. Henry McKenney ; Village, 1. Hugh F. O'Lone.

The representation was certainly very fair, and as the deputies were all provided with instructions by their constituents, every security was obtained that a reliable statement of English opinion would be presented to the French.

The meeting took place on Tuesday morning, as arranged. Sixteen rounds were discharged from the six-pounder cannon at Fort Garry, which had been seized by the insurgents, and armed sentinels surrounded the place of meeting. The public were excluded. The English party objected to the show of force used in firing cannon and musketry, and the attendance of armed sentinels, but were assured that these demonstrations were meant only to do them honour.

An attempt was made to secure the presence of a reporter, but the French party peremptorily refused to permit it.

A sealed message was handed to the meeting from the Governor of Rupert's Land, which, when opened and read, after a two hours' discussion as to the propriety of receiving it, was found to be a solemn protest against all the recent outrages. It has since been printed in the form of a Proclamation, addressed to the inhabitants of Red River Settlement, and widely circulated. It was thankfully received and highly extolled by the English members, whose sentiments it embodied, but it produced no apparent effect on the French.

The meeting between the French and English delegates has already occupied two days. As the Quarterly Court commenced its session on Thursday morning, and the room in which the members were convened

<sup>1</sup> A detachment of the Royal Canadian Rifles was stationed at Red River from 1857 to 1861.

<sup>2</sup> Maurice Lowman ; see note 1 on p. 166.



was consequently occupied, the temporary Council agreed to defer its further meeting, from Wednesday evening last, until Monday morning, when it will resume its deliberations.

There is said to be some hope entertained by the English members that a compromise will be effected between the two parties until Governor McDougall can be at least communicated with. As yet, however, the French party has preserved a wonderful silence respecting its ultimate policy and wishes. It merely declares itself determined to uphold its rights. What these are nobody seems to know.

It is at least satisfactory to be able to report that as yet no lives have been lost. The insurgents have been kept in very good order by their leaders, and drunkenness has been prevented to a very wonderful extent. The situation, however, even under these alleviating circumstances, is very embarrassing. Travellers require to provide themselves with "passes" under the hands of the leaders before they can pass the barriers erected across the highways. The outrages of which these are some, may lead to events which may retard the colonization of this country, but their ultimate effect must be to alienate the minds of men from the perpetrators and lead them to long more ardently for the day when a higher stage of civilization shall be established, and barbarism and semi-barbarism shall disappear.

X: A NOTEBOOK OF JAMES ROSS, DECEMBER 1 TO DECEMBER 14, 1869.

[*Printed from Public Archives of Manitoba, Ross Papers*].

Wednesday, 1 Dec.

French Council met today to hear reply of English to their request to join their Provisional Government. The English delegates did not go to meet them, because Queen's Proclamation out and partly also because most of us had ceased to be delegates—I for one met R. Tait<sup>1</sup> at Bannatyne's about 10 o'clock. He told me the Proclamation wd. be out at noon! We went to Dr. Bird's<sup>2</sup> and there T. Bunn and W. Tait<sup>3</sup> read proclamation. Sensation. To send the replies of the English with 940 names in a parcel by Adam Klein to Riel and asked receipt.<sup>4</sup> Got it.

<sup>1</sup> Robert Tait ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Curtis J. Bird ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Bunn and William Tait ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>4</sup> Adam Klyne ; a brother of George Klyne ; see note 2 on p. 197. What the replies of the English were is unknown.



Then went to Bannatyne's. McKenney<sup>1</sup> there, read proclamation and said it was not Queen's but Macdougall's proclamation. We all argued against that view. Hen [sic] then said if it *was* Queen's, he would leave the country. D. Gunn<sup>2</sup> arrived. We went then got Bannatyne to go up and read the Proclamation to the French Council. Thereupon they sent down for the English delegates. The genuineness of document being admitted after some talk Riel said it staggered him much. So D. Gunn told me. When McKenney was saying Macdougall obnoxious to the people, Riel said to whom? M.—to your people I presume. R—not to me. As simple William Macdougall I did not like. I have no objection to him as governor. Adjourned at 4 o'clock till 8 to allow time to get their list of rights drawn up. On reassembling these were read and we went over list of dozen or more one by one. They seemed loosely drawn up and many of them impossible. We pointed out good many of the objections, but as passing of them depended on majority, of course, all passed. And we did not care much, for we were ready to ask anything almost. But when at close, Riel said all these rights must be granted us by McDougall before we let him in, and if he cannot he must stay out of country until he got Act Parliament embodying them, we declined to accede, and refused to send delegates to Governor on that platform. They chose two delegates, however. Riel got angry, scolded us saying we not worthy name British subjects—this just showed what we were—go, go home, we had humbugged him fortnight [sic]. They would go and fight for their rights, and get them too and when got would generously let us share the benefit. Bannatyne in conference after meeting, we English met in Dutch George's.<sup>3</sup> McKenney proposed we send letter to Macdougall, counselling in the name of humanity to remain out of Settlement. Disagreed. Then proposed we should still agree to send delegates and suggested Dr. Bird and Bannatyne. I said no objection to them going as private gentlemen, but we could not undertake to send them as delegates from the English speaking Settlement. Col. Dennis came in today and went down to Stone Fort. I told those I saw to advise Den[n]is not to do anything against the French because we the English did not want to fight our French brethren. Let him get soldiers if he likes but he must not get us into a civil war. Those I spoke agreed with me.

<sup>1</sup> Henry McKenney ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Donald Gunn ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> George Emmerling's hotel.

This evening I got a note from Col. Den[n]is saying he would like to see me tomorrow somewhere, and would let me know where and when.<sup>1</sup>

Thursday 2 Dec.

This morning saw T. Bunn, three or four French Councillors came to Bannatyne and said what are we really to do.<sup>2</sup> He answered and then they asked him up to confer with Riel and the rest. Bannatyne went up and stayed a long time. Then a delegation of the loyal French waited on Riel and B. left. Wm. Tait said to Bannatyne, T. Bunn, O'Donohue and myself that having failed to secure peace, after fullest effort, he had now made up his mind! If called on, he would go and do his duty. He said moreover to B. as a friend to look out for himself. Got letter from Blackie and Alexander.<sup>3</sup> T. Bunn came to sleep at my house and D. Gunn, sen. and jnr. also. W. Drever and Geo. Sutherland<sup>4</sup> took down the Canadians in town tonight about 11 o'clock. Great excitement in town tonight. Fear of collision. McArthur<sup>5</sup> said he was sorry to hear when somebody told me to beware of him as he was not local, that I said "is that really so I have opened my heart to him." I justified that saying by reminding him of what I had said to him though a comparative stranger to me. Bob O'Lone,<sup>6</sup> an honest man, said he did not want to help either side, but would do what in his judgment and conscience he believed right for the whole settlement. I told Bob the difficulty we English delegates felt was that the French wanted us to do what was unlawful, and as law-abiding subjects we could not consent.

I heard that the American consul<sup>7</sup> had warned American citizens not to interfere in the dispute. Good advice.

Friday, 3 Dec.

Charles Nolin said Mactavish urged peace on Riel & Co. but added<sup>8</sup> that they might go on if they thought they could succeed. Last night had

<sup>1</sup> This note is in P.A.M., Ross Papers, U., Red River Insurrection, 4.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, December 2, 1869, p. 196. The French were François and Augustin Nolin and Jean-Baptiste Morin, *dit* Perrault, all of Oak Point.

<sup>3</sup> The identity of these two is doubtful.

<sup>4</sup> William Drever, Jr.; see note 1 on p. 192. This George Sutherland has not been identified.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander, or Peter, McArthur; see note 3 on p. 212 and note 6 on p. 217.

<sup>6</sup> Bob O'Lone, American; with Hugh F. O'Lone, proprietor of the Red Saloon.

<sup>7</sup> Oscar Malmros; see note 1 on p. 187.

<sup>8</sup> *I.e.*, "Nolin added"; for Charles Nolin, see note 2 on p. 167.

long talk with Thom Bunn, Bannatyne and Begg. Mail from Canada with *Globe* and *Spectator* articles on the rising. Told Begg somebody (D. Gunn) had complained of his having gone below<sup>1</sup> and denied that cannons had been pointed at Schultz's house. Pierre Poitras,<sup>2</sup> Pierre Ayotte<sup>3</sup> [?] and Patrice Breland<sup>4</sup> came in while we were talking and spoke to Bannatyne. They left agreeing to submit their programme of rights to govr. Mactavish this morning.

Heard that Schultz was getting an armed force to defend himself and his property. God help us, I fear that will lead us into a fight. This morning at 1 o'clock Riel and 20 men entered Schultz's house and asked for him. He was down below.<sup>5</sup> They ransacked all the house. They then did the same at Bown's office, and at Col. Dennis' office. At last place they said they wanted George Klein.<sup>6</sup> I believed the reason is that Klein was said to have brought in Col. Dennis from Pembina and that he was going to bring in the Governor in the same way. Thom Bunn and Don. Gunn Jr. left my house early—before I was up—and went to town. It was D. Gunn, Jr. told me about Schultz and added Schultz got home at breakfast time—heard news and prepared arms. Then went off down to bring back Canadians who had left for Dennis at Lower Fort. A priest addressed French Council in favor of peace. This morning Coldwell<sup>7</sup> went to see Riel at Fort. Cd. not find him in office as he and Council had gone in to parley with Mactavish. When confab over Coldwell spoke about printing. Riel said could not—at least till afternoon when he wd. send down word. They spoke of terms of sale of Pioneer to French. Coldwell named terms. R. said they would not give as much.

Lowman,<sup>8</sup> Wm. Drever Jr. and myself had long talk with Charles Nolin in Mosha's.<sup>9</sup> He largely agreed with us. Concluded by starting for Riel to meet us in Drever's. They did not come. Accessions to French ranks tonight. 40 men at Schultz's place tonight armed and ready. Schultz opened enlisting paper. I moved down children to Mr. Black's<sup>10</sup> and Dick Pritchard's<sup>11</sup> in p.m. Thence went with Don. Gunn

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, November 27 and 28, 1869, on pp. 188–190.

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Poitras ; see note 2 on p. 166.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre Ayotte ; not identified.

<sup>4</sup> Patrice Breland ; see note 2 on p. 166.

<sup>5</sup> *I.e.*, at Lower Fort Garry.

<sup>6</sup> George Klyne ; see note 3 on p. 197.

<sup>7</sup> William Coldwell, Ross's brother-in-law ; see note 1 on p. 159.

<sup>8</sup> Maurice Lowman ; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>9</sup> Mosha has not been identified.

<sup>10</sup> The Reverend John Black, Ross's brother-in-law ; see note 1 on p. 269.

<sup>11</sup> Richard Pritchard, 1837–?, of Kildonan, nephew of James Ross.

and had talk with Judge Black. He disapproved the French programme of rights entirely.

Saturday 4 Dec.

Large number of French pouring [into the town—McKenney said to Coldwell there would be 600, but probably only 300. Priests said to be in consultation with Bannatyne this morning]<sup>1</sup> Riel said he would want something printed this morning. It was said Dr. Schultz was going to raise the Canadian flag today, and French warned him not to do so. He did not do it. My man George Fortney<sup>2</sup> left me this morning to enlist. I engaged Hugh Jackson<sup>3</sup> this evening. Went over to Mr. Bannatyne's store. Thence to Garratt's.<sup>4</sup> For the first time met there Henri Coutu.<sup>5</sup> He warned me of what French threatened against me. This evening French got Coldwell to print their articles of rights adding one or two new ones and saying all the delegates had agreed to them. This was not correct, but n'importe.

Sunday 5 Dec.

Did not go to Church, but went with Coldwell to town. Met James McKay<sup>6</sup> and Judge Black.<sup>7</sup> Former just returned from interview with Col. Den[n]is. Latter said he was going to see Riel and Co. about the resolutions or articles of rights set forth in print yesterday. He seemed to think them absurd. Then went home. In afternoon drove with Coldwell to Fort to see Riel. Guards willing to let us in but others rudely turned our horse off and said "pas d'affaire." In evening went with Coldwell to see Bannatyne. There met Mr. Hargrave.<sup>8</sup> After long chat proposed new basis—

1. English deputation to keep Den[n]is quiet and Schultz too.
2. Joint delegation to see Mr. McDougall about rights claimed.

<sup>1</sup> The words within the brackets are in shorthand in the original.

<sup>2</sup> George Fortney ; presumably a Canadian, as he worked with Thomas Scott on the Dawson Road, was tried with him and was captured with the Schultz party on December 7 ; see Begg's *Journal* for that date ; not otherwise identified.

<sup>3</sup> Hugh Jackson has not been identified.

<sup>4</sup> Charles Garrett's hotel ; see note 9 on p. 208.

<sup>5</sup> Henri Coutu ; see note 5 on p. 207.

<sup>6</sup> James McKay ; see note 1 on p. 197.

<sup>7</sup> Judge John Black ; see note 2 on p. 172.

<sup>8</sup> J. J. Hargrave ; see note 1 on p. 167.



Bannatyne agreed to present these next morning to Riel. Wrote letter to Canada, advising George Brown<sup>1</sup> not to encourage sending any force here, but to urge the Government to grant all they possibly could to the French and thereby save the Settlement.

Monday 6 Dec.

George Klein brought to town a prisoner taken (1) because he had conveyed Col. Den[n]is into the Settlement (2) because he was carrying dispatche[s] back and forth to and from Governor. Large number of French come to town. No word all day from Bannatyne as to propositions to Riel. In evening took Maggie and Rupert<sup>2</sup> down to Mr. Black's. On way stopped at John Fraser's—had chat—I took tea there. I wrote Den[n]is to keep quiet.<sup>3</sup>

7 Dec.

John Sutherlan[d]<sup>4</sup> who had last evening gone down to Den[n]is called a meeting at Frog Plain schoolhouse<sup>5</sup> at 9 a.m. He had seen Riel before starting down and when got back at midnight large attendance. Don Matheson<sup>6</sup> chairman—Alex'r Polson<sup>7</sup> secretary. Sutherland said French wanted delegates to speak to them. I said if so, good sign—showed open to negotiation yet—send them. John Fraser<sup>8</sup> asked me, as delegate, what about the French printed statement that all the English delegates had agreed to their demands. I said when I saw statement “I was surprised, and perhaps shortly the English delegates would have a say about that.” Further I said we were willing to *ask* for anything for peace sake [sic], but when Riel said we must keep governor out of country till accedes to demands or gets Act of Parliament guaranteeing them, we demurred. Meeting broke up on appointing J. Sutherland for Kildonan, C. Inkster<sup>9</sup>—St. John's and Alex. Dahl<sup>10</sup>—St. Paul's as delegates to see Den[n]is as to what could be done. I previously had said that in no case would I act as delegate. Then went to Mr. Black's. Shortly Col.

<sup>1</sup> As Ross had been an editorial writer on Brown's paper, the *Globe*, it was natural that he should write to Brown with respect to the disturbances.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, Mrs. Ross and her son Rupert.

<sup>3</sup> This letter is in C.S.P., 1870 (12), Ross to Dennis, December 6, 1869; draft in P.A.M., Ross Papers, U., Red River Insurrection, 5, dated December 5.

<sup>4</sup> This was John Sutherland of East Kildonan; see note 6 on p. 207.

<sup>5</sup> *I.e.*, Kildonan school house.

<sup>6</sup> Donald Matheson, 1833–?, of Kildonan.

<sup>7</sup> Alexander Polson; see note 1 on p. 190.

<sup>8</sup> John Fraser; see note 1 on p. 258.

<sup>9</sup> Colin Inkster; see note 1 on p. 191.

<sup>10</sup> Alexander Dahl; not otherwise identified, but see note 8 on p. 271.

Den[n]is and nephew arrived from Stone Fort. He said glad to see me. I had yesterday written him not to act aggressively on the French, as I believed a civil war greatest disaster of any. We got Judge Black, John Fraser, Wm. Fraser<sup>1</sup> and J. Sutherland dropped in. Major Boulton also present.<sup>2</sup> Had long conference. Result was that Col. said would be guided by voice of people. He sent letter to Riel to let Schultz and party off—also (through Boulton) to Schultz saying could not relieve them, and better get out of town even if had to surrender.<sup>3</sup> Shortly Coldwell arrived with declaration of plans by French.<sup>4</sup> I translated it to those present. Bernard Rogan Ross came in.<sup>5</sup> Shortly after heard French had induced Schultz and party to surrender and had marched them up to Fort—thereafter firing great number of salutes. Messenger from Bishop Machray soon after asking for Col. Den[n]is. Mr. Black supposed it was to ask for protection. Mrs. Schultz very ill and had to be lifted out of bed into cutter to be taken to Fort. Mrs. Mair and Mrs. Dr. O'Donnell also in party and servant girl. 40 men in all. Intense excitement. I went for John Fraser to come to Mr. Black's and there heard by some messenger from town that Schultz difficulty had been settled. In evening went home with Coldwell and got him to go to town to hear news. Sat up till 1 a.m. waiting for him and writing this to pass time. He heard Schultz and wife taken into Governor Mactavish's house for the night—all other male prisoners huddled together in 2 small rooms over Company's office. Present intention is to send all to Pembina.<sup>6</sup> Mrs. Schultz not well—in bed when surrender. Dr. had to wrap her in blankets and carry her out to cutter which was drawn by hand. She dreadfully pale Mrs. Mair and other lady crying. Long and loud salute fired by French for half an hour about dusk—cannon and musketry.

Wednesday 8 Dec.

Strang<sup>7</sup> said McDougall again in Company's Fort Pembina, and 20 French off last evening to remove him again across the line. He thought

<sup>1</sup> William Fraser ; see note 3 on p. 238.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Arkell Boulton ; see note 1 on p. 314.

<sup>3</sup> The meeting is described by Dennis in C.S.P., 1870 (12), Record of Proceedings, December 7, 1869, but he makes no reference to a letter to Riel, which has not been found, or to a message to Schultz.

<sup>4</sup> Dennis's report, referred to above, makes it clear that this was the Proclamation of December 8, 1869 ; see No. XIII below.

<sup>5</sup> Bernard Rogan Ross ; see note 1 on p. 185.

<sup>6</sup> An intention only partly carried out.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew Strang ; see note 3 on p. 182.

Schultz and party would not be removed across the boundary, but paroled. He said ladies of the party were not made prisoners, but they chose to go with their husbands of their own accord. He added that Mrs. Mair came down to store (Schultz's) today to get some things, and did without escort or guard.

John Sutherland<sup>1</sup> sent me word that he had heard the French intended to take me prisoner tomorrow. I went to Sutherland's house and heard same from himself. Then went down to Mr. Black's to tell them. I said at once to Sutherland if the French wanted to take me I would go up to my house and there await their order. I said I would not keep out of their way. No, I felt I had done nothing wrong against them and I would not shrink from falling into their hands. I told Mr. Black, Coldwell and others the same thing. I returned accordingly to my mother's house<sup>2</sup> to wait for the arrest. This evening Bob O'Lone and Ellwood<sup>3</sup> told Coldwell the same thing that I was to be taken tomorrow, as they heard.

Thursday 9 Dec.

Heard James McKay and family had gone to Pembina.<sup>4</sup> American Consul is in favor of negotiations with Den[n]is for peace. All quiet: road through town unobstructed. William Hallett taken prisoner two or three days ago. His son too on Tuesday.<sup>5</sup> Went to Robert Tait's<sup>6</sup> with my answer to Stutsman<sup>7</sup> written at his request.

Friday 10 Dec.

French flag hoisted today at 3 p.m. It is said to have a fleur de lis and shamrock. Great firing and éclat over it. Then boys' brass band from St. Boniface came down to town and played 3 tunes. Dutch George distributed cakes among them. Guards in town fired several salutes also. The crowd was at George's door. A cry for "3 cheers for the Provisional Government" was responded to. As joke Donaldson<sup>8</sup> called for 3

<sup>1</sup> This was John Sutherland of Point Douglas; see note 1 on p. 283.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, Colony Gardens, residence of Alexander Ross.

<sup>3</sup> George Ellwood; see note 2 on p. 179.

<sup>4</sup> McKay had crossed the border as he felt himself unable either to fight against his relatives or against the incoming Canadian government: P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, McKay to Dr. Rowand, Pembina, December 21, 1869.

<sup>5</sup> William Hallett; see note 2 on p. 154 and note 1 on p. 163; the son has not been identified.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Tait; name in short hand; see note 1 on p. 166.

<sup>7</sup> Enos Stutsman; see note 2 on p. 165.

<sup>8</sup> H. S. Donaldson; see note 1 on p. 188.

groans for Mulligan.<sup>1</sup> In evening great jollification in town. Large parties going from saloon to saloon getting treats. Bob O'Lone had boy beating an old kettle for drum, announcing progress of the party—John and Wm. Fraser called to consult as to what should be done if the French again wished us to join their government. They thought we should do nothing. John Fraser said he saw Riel help himself to stationery in Cos.' store.

*Saturday 11th*

Rev. Mr. Black called. He got in to see the prisoners and had prayers with them. Riel told him to be sure to do no more than "pray". At first he refused application to be admitted to see them, but afterwards consented.

Brought home Maggie and two of the children yesterday, and fetched other two today.—Had chat with Sam Pritchard at Dickey's today.<sup>2</sup>—Coldwell went to see the Bishop today. B[ishop]. said if no immediate steps taken by Canada she might run risk of losing country. He (the B.) had written to Lord Granville warning him that this trouble might come—this armed uprising I mean.<sup>3</sup> In evening at George's one of the French guards, son of Martin Lavelle<sup>4</sup> (he said) bothered me good deal—pretending to arrest me—calling at George's door for other guards—and then telling me I could go. He had before said I was to wait a while. During my stay there he asked me to treat him, then asked for my ring—then for its value—then for a shirt. I consented to nothing, but spoke to him in a good natured friendly way. Coldwell, McArthur, George Ellwood, Ackland,<sup>5</sup> young Gingras<sup>6</sup> and others present.

Report tonight McDougall had been again turned out of Company's post at Pembina and sent across the line. Provisional Gov't offered Bannatyne P. Mship.

<sup>1</sup> James Mulligan ; see note 1 on p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend Samuel Pritchard ; see note 1 on p. 319. Richard Pritchard ; see note 11 on p. 439.

<sup>3</sup> See note 2 on p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Lavallée ; Pierre Martin *dit* Lavallée.

<sup>5</sup> Ackland has not been identified, but presumably was that "Mr. Arkland" who arrived with George Ellwood at the Stone Fort on December 10 ; C.S.P., 1870 (12), Record of Proceedings, December 10, 1869.

<sup>6</sup> François Gingras ; see note 3 on p. 207.



Sunday 12

No new development. Some of the French said to be going home.

Monday 13

Brot [sic] home trunks from Mr. Black's. Fonseca<sup>1</sup> arrested, and Barber's man, Sebstone,<sup>2</sup> carrying a sword. Coldwell received order from Riel not to publish his paper until peace fully restored in the Territory. With reference to last line Saturday's notes B[annatyne] said French first wanted to keep P.O. among themselves, but on Bannatyne's representations agreed to leave it in his hands on this side. He said he wd. swear to do his duty faithfully, but would not to support their Government.

Col. Den[n]is left last Friday or Saturday from Lower Fort with Joe Macdonald.<sup>3</sup> Capt. Boulton left on Thursday so Mr. Whimster<sup>4</sup> said. Joe Macdonald called about midday Friday at James Stevenson's<sup>5</sup> to get horse as his was done out. Suspect he had Den[n]is. He said he would not take Stevenson's animal beyond Poplar Point. He returned the animal on Sunday evening. Thomas Spence<sup>6</sup> temporarily arrested.

Tuesday 14

American Consul is said to have tried to get Fonseca out, but seems unsuccessful.

Man [ ]<sup>7</sup> threatened Barber today if he did not give him credit. Barber went to Fort, saw O'Donohue who said kick such men out and that French Gov't would scrupulously respect private rights.

<sup>1</sup> W. G. Fonseca ; see note 2 on p. 227.

<sup>2</sup> E. L. Barber ; see note 4 on p. 245. Joseph Sabiston ; see note 1 on p. 227.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Macdonald, a leader of the rising in St. Andrews ; see C.S.P., 1870 (12), Record of Proceedings, December 7, 1869 ; presumably also McDougall's correspondent of December 8, 1869 (C.O. 42/684, cited in Stanley, *Birth of Western Canada*, p. 416), and a Canadian partisan.

<sup>4</sup> D. B. Whimster, ?-1907, came to Red River in 1869 ; appointed teacher in Kildonan School (later Nisbet Hall).

<sup>5</sup> James Stevenson has not been identified.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Spence ; see note 2 on p. 284.

<sup>7</sup> The name is in shorthand and translation is uncertain ; possibly Augustin Nolin ; see note 2 on p. 196.

XI: A PROCLAMATION BY THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, DECEMBER 6, 1869.

[*Reprinted from Canada : Sessional Papers*, 1870, V (12), pp. 43-44].<sup>1</sup>

V.

R.

By His Excellency the Right Honorable Sir JOHN YOUNG,<sup>2</sup> Baronet, a Member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, Governor General of Canada.

To all and every the Loyal Subjects of Her Majesty the Queen, and to all to whom these Presents shall come,

GREETING :

THE QUEEN has charged me, as Her representative, to inform you that certain misguided persons in Her Settlements on the Red River, have banded themselves together to oppose by force the entry into Her North-Western Territories of the officer selected to administer, in Her Name, the Government, when the Territories are united to the Dominion of Canada, under the authority of the late Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom ;<sup>3</sup> and that those parties have also forcibly, and with violence, prevented others of Her loyal subjects from ingress into the country.

Her Majesty feels assured that she may rely upon the loyalty of her subjects in the North-West, and believes those men, who have thus illegally joined together, have done so from some misrepresentation.

The Queen is convinced that in sanctioning the Union of the North-West Territories with Canada, she is promoting the best interest of the residents, and at the same time strengthening and consolidating her North American possessions as part of the British Empire. You may judge then of the sorrow and displeasure with which the Queen views the unreasonable and lawless proceedings which have occurred.

Her Majesty commands me to state to you, that she will always be

<sup>1</sup> This Proclamation was based on the authority and terms of a cablegram from Lord Granville, the Colonial Secretary, dated November 26, 1869. See Begg's *Journal* above, January 20, 1870, pp. 271-72.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Young. See note 1, p. 268.

<sup>3</sup> United Kingdom : Statutes, 31 and 32 Victoria, C.105, the Rupert's Land Act, 1868.

ready through me as her representative, to redress all well founded grievances, and that she has instructed me to hear and consider any complaints that may be made, or desires that may be expressed to me as Governor General. At the same time she has charged me to exercise all the powers and authority with which she has entrusted me in the support of order, and the suppression of unlawful disturbances.

By Her Majesty's authority I do therefore assure you, that on the union with Canada all your civil and religious rights and privileges will be respected, your properties secured to you, and that your Country will be governed, as in the past, under British laws, and in the spirit of British justice.

I do, further, under her authority, entreat and command those of you who are still assembled and banded together in defiance of law, peaceably to disperse and return to your homes, under the penalties of the law in case of disobedience.

And I do lastly inform you, that in case of your immediate and peaceable obedience and dispersion, I shall order that no legal proceeding be taken against any parties implicated in these unfortunate breaches of the law.

Given under my Hand and Seal at Arms at Ottawa, this Sixth day of December, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-nine, and in the Thirty-third year of Her Majesty's Reign.

[SEAL]

By Command.

H. L. Langevin,  
Secretary of State.

JOHN YOUNG

## XII: DECLARATION OF THE INHABITANTS OF RUPERT'S LAND AND THE NORTH-WEST.<sup>1</sup>

[*From the original text in A.A.S.B.*].

[Translation]

It is admitted as a principle of morality that public authority exists of indubitable right ; as it is also acknowledged that a people which has no

<sup>1</sup> The Proclamation of December 8, proclaiming the Provisional Government, is printed in its English version in C.S.P., 1870 (12) ; in Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 904-906 ; in Begg's *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 168-170, as well as in Begg's *Journal* above. A copy of the printed French version is in P.A.M., Ross Papers, W. But

government is free to adopt one form of government rather than another ; to accept or refuse that which is proposed for it : it is on the ground of these two principles that the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West were content to suffer in silence, and to bear the kind of servitude in which the peculiar circumstances which surrounded their cradle had placed them.

A company of adventurers, known under the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, and vested with certain powers by His Majesty Charles II had established themselves in Rupert's Land and in the North-West to carry on the fur trade. That Company consisted of an aggregation of men who had need of a constitution. But as the chief concern was trade that constitution was largely confined to it. As there was then, however, no government which was concerned with the interests of the people already established in the country, need was for that people to resort, in matters requiring judicial settlement, to the officers of that Company: such was the origin of the government which has ruled the country to the present time.

This government, so accepted, was far from meeting the needs of the population actually resident, which in virtue of its energy and devotion developed, grew and rose to the point at which it deserved, because of its numbers, its civilization and its commerce, a place among the nations.

Always moved by the principles set out above, the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West supported loyally the above mentioned government and obeyed it faithfully ; when contrary to the law of nations in March, 1869, that government abandoned them and transferred to Canada, by certain negotiations, which it did not even deign to communicate to its people, all the rights which it had, and those it claimed to have in the country.

Now as it is another principle conceded by all publicists (among whom we could cite Berclay [sic] and Duvoisin<sup>1</sup>) that a people becomes

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it is thought worth while to publish a copy of the original version in French (see Appendix, pp. 479-81), of which the above is an English translation, because this first draft in French makes it certain there was no immediate American influence on the composition of the document, although the English version in places reads like a parody of the Declaration of Independence. The original document was in fact composed by Dugas and Ritchot, and the original is in Dugas's handwriting : see Morice, *The Red River Insurrection*, p. 162.

<sup>1</sup> It is surmised that this was either William Barclay, 1546-1608, Scottish jurist and author of the Gallican work *De Potestate Papae*, or his son and editor John ; and that Duvoisin was his translator. This learned reference was dropped.



free, and can henceforth govern itself as it judges fit, when the sovereign to which it was subject abandons it, or subjects it against its will, to a foreign sovereign, and that, moreover, it transfers no right to the sovereign to which it subjects that people.

We, the representatives elected by the people, assembled in council at Fort Garry, after having invoked the God of Nations, relying upon these fundamental moral principles, declare solemnly, in the name of our constituents and in our own names, before God and before men:

1. That from the day on which the Government, which we have always respected, has abandoned us in transferring to a foreign power the sacred authority which had been entrusted to it, we are of right free and released from all obedience to it, and that the sole legitimate authority today in Rupert's Land and the North-West is the authority accorded provisionally by the people to us their representatives.

2. That we refuse to recognize the authority of Canada which pretends to have the right to come to impose on us a form of government still more contrary to our rights and to our interests than the government to which we have submitted of necessity until now.

3. That on the first of November last, when we despatched a delegation to conduct beyond the limits of our country His Honour William McDougall and his companions, who were advancing on our territory in the name of Canada without prior warning on his part, and in spite of a prohibition intimated to him by us, to come and govern here as an autocrat,<sup>1</sup> we have only acted in conformity with the sacred right of all citizens to oppose themselves vigorously to the subjection of their native land.

4. That we continue and will continue to oppose Canada with all our energies, and the entry of the Canadian government in our country, under the form announced, and in case of persistence on its part to come to trouble us with warlike incursions, we protest beforehand against these unjust acts and declare it to be responsible before God and before all people for the incalculable misfortunes which would be the result of its ambitious rashness. Let it know that before seeing our country enslaved, we shall contrive to use the means of defence that Providence has put in our hands, and it is not to see it invaded by strangers that we have so often defended it, at the price of our blood, against the hordes of barbarians today become our friends and allies.

5. That notwithstanding the Dominion of Canada will always find

<sup>1</sup> A phrase—"en despot"—McDougall was said to have used to describe his new post.

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us ready to enter with it on negotiations favourable to its enlargement<sup>1</sup> and to our prosperity.

In support of these declarations, relying on Divine Providence, we commit by oath our lives our fortunes and our honour.

Given at Fort Garry December 8, 1869.

JOHNY [SIC] BRUCE, PRESIDENT  
L. RIEL, SEC.

### XIII: A MEMORANDUM BY SIR JOHN MACDONALD ON THE NECESSITY OF DELAYING THE TRANSFER.

[*Reprinted from Canada : Sessional Papers, 1870, V, (12), pp. 141-144.*]

Copy of a Report of a Committee of the Honorable the Privy Council, dated the 16th December, 1869.

The Committee of Council have had before them the despatch of the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies of the 30th ultimo, on the subject of the two telegrams sent by Your Excellency, on the 23rd and 27th ultimo, to the Colonial Office, on the subject of the disturbances in the Red River Settlement.<sup>2</sup>

The Committee readily acknowledge the correctness of the narrative in the despatch of the proceedings which resulted in the final arrangements for the transfer of the North-Western Territory to Canada.

The circumstances which created the desire of the Government and people of Canada to acquire that country, have been so often and so recently stated, that they do not seem to require reiteration. It was alike [in] the interest of Her Majesty's Government, Canada, and the Hudson Bay Company, that the transfer should be made. Canada still desires to acquire the Territory, and is quite ready to perform all the obligations that she has incurred under the recent arrangements made

<sup>1</sup> The interesting phrase *à son agrandissement* was eliminated from the published versions.

<sup>2</sup> The Colonial Secretary's despatch of November 30, and the Governor-General's cablegrams of November 23 and November 27 (26) are printed in C.S.P., 1870 (12). The cablegrams informed the Colonial Office that McDougall had been stopped and urged that the transfer be delayed. In his despatch Granville stated that the Imperial Government was prepared to accept a short postponement of the transfer, but was unable to agree that the transaction as a whole might be re-opened.

with Her Majesty's Government and the Company for the completion of the transfer.

At the same time, it would seem clear that if Canada is bound to accept the transfer of the Territory, the Company is equally bound to make it. It surely was never contemplated by any of the parties engaged in the negotiations that the transfer was to be a mere interchange of instruments. It must, from the nature of things, have been understood by all parties, that the surrender by the Company to the Queen, and the transfer by Her Majesty to the Dominion, was not to be one of title only. The Company was to convey not only their rights under the charter, but the Territory itself of which it was in possession, and the Territory so conveyed was to be transferred by Her Majesty to Canada.

That there would be an armed resistance by the inhabitants to the transfer was, it is to be presumed, unexpected by all parties ; it certainly was so by the Canadian Government.

In this regard, the Company cannot be acquitted of all blame. They had an old and fully organized Government in the Country, to which the people appeared to render ready obedience. Their Governor was advised by Council, in which some of the leading residents had seats. They had every means of information as to the state of feeling existing in the Country.

They knew, or ought to have known, the light in which the proposed negotiations were viewed by the people under their rule. If they were aware of the feeling of discontent, they ought frankly to have stated it to the Imperial and Canadian Governments. If they were ignorant of the discontent, the responsibility of such wilful blindness on the part of their officers must rest upon them.

For more than a year these negotiations have been actively proceeded with, and it was the duty of the Company to have prepared the people under its rule for the change—to have explained the precautions taken to protect the interests of the inhabitants, and to have removed any misapprehensions that may have existed among them.

It appears that no steps of any kind, in that direction, were taken. The people have been led to suppose that they have been sold to Canada, with an utter disregard of their rights and position.

When Governor McTavish visited Canada in June last, he was in communication with the Canadian Government, and he never intimated that he had even a suspicion of discontent existing, nor did he make any

suggestions as to the best mode of effecting the proposed change, with the assent of the inhabitants.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Granville states that "Throughout these negotiations, it has never been hinted that the Company is to be bound to hand over its Territory in a state of tranquillity. Rather its inability to secure that tranquillity, and the dangers resulting from that inability to the neighbouring Colony, is taken for granted as a reason why its responsibilities should be adopted by Canada." Now the obvious reason why no express stipulation to that effect was made was, that it was assumed, by all parties, that the Company had both the right and the power to hand over the Territory. It *was* in a state of tranquillity, and no suggestion was made of the possibility of such tranquillity being disturbed. Canada did not allege, nor did the Company admit any inability, on the part of the latter, to secure the tranquillity of the country in its present condition.

It is true that Canada had pointed out that in the future, with the population of the United States rapidly pressing forward towards the boundaries of the North-West Territory, such pressure would soon overflow into British Territory, and that the Company would, in such case, be unable to govern or control the large and alien population which might then take possession of the fertile country along the frontier.

But this state of things has not yet arisen, and the resistance comes not from any strangers or new comers, but from those born and brought up under the Government of the Company, and who have hitherto yielded it a willing allegiance.

These statements are not made as a matter of complaint against the Company, but simply as a justification of the course taken by the Canadian Government, which is observed upon in the despatch. That course has been governed solely by a desire to carry out the transfer under the arrangement in the quietest and best manner possible ; and in a way that will not leave behind it any cause for discontent or disquiet in the future.

The resistance of these misguided people is evidently not against the Sovereignty of Her Majesty or the Government of the Hudson Bay Company, but to the assumption of the Government by Canada.

They profess themselves satisfied to remain as they are, and that if the present system of Government were allowed to continue, they would at once disperse to their homes.

It is obvious then that the wisest course to pursue is, for the present,

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, p. 26.



to continue the authority of the Company, which the insurgents affect to respect, while steps are being taken to remove the misapprehensions which exist, and to reconcile the people to the change.

Any hasty attempt by the Canadian Government to force their rule upon the insurgents would probably result in armed resistance and bloodshed. Every other course should be tried before resort is had to force. If life were once lost in an encounter between a Canadian force and the inhabitants, the seeds of hostility to Canada and Canadian rule would be sown, and might create an ineradicable hatred to the union of the countries, and thus mar the future prosperity of British America.

If anything like hostilities should commence, the temptation to the wild Indian Tribes, and to the restless adventurers who abound in the United States (many of them with military experience gained in the late civil war), to join the insurgents would be almost irresistible. Already it is said that the Fenian Organization look upon this rising as another means of exhibiting their hatred to England.

No one can foresee the end of the complications that might thus be occasioned, not only as between Canada and the North-West, but between the United States and England.

From a sincere conviction of the gravity of the situation, and not from any desire to repudiate or postpone the performance of any of their engagements, the Canadian Government have urged a temporary delay of the transfer.

This is not a question of money—it may be one of peace or war. It is one in which the present and future prosperity of the British possessions in North America is involved, which prosperity, hasty action might permanently prejudice.

Even were the £300,000 paid over, the impolicy of putting an end to the only constituted authority existing in the country and compelling Canada to assert her title by force would remain.

It is better to have the semblance of a Government in the Company than none at all. While the issue of the Proclamation would put an end to the Government of the Hudson Bay Company, it would not substitute Government by Canada therefor. Such a Government is physically impossible until the armed resistance is ended, and thus a state of anarchy and confusion would ensue, and a legal status might be given to any Government *de facto*, formed by the inhabitants for the protection of their lives and property.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, pp. 77–78.

On a review of the whole circumstances, the Committee would recommend that your Excellency should urge upon Her Majesty's Government the expediency of allowing matters to remain as they are until quiet is restored, or, in case of failure of all effort to do so, the time should have arrived when it is possible to enter the Country in force, and compel obedience to Her Majesty's Proclamation and authority.

As by the terms of the late Act, the surrender to the Queen must be followed, within a month, by Her Majesty's Order in Council, admitting Rupert's Land into the Dominion of Canada, the proper course seems to be that the surrender itself should be postponed, and that the purchase money should remain on deposit meanwhile.

The Committee would also request your Excellency to assure Lord Granville, that the Government here have taken, and are taking active measures to bring about a happier state of affairs.

They have sent on a mission of peace to the French half-breeds now in arms, the very Reverend Mr. Thibault,<sup>1</sup> Vicar General (who has laboured as a clergyman among them for thirty-nine years) accompanied by Colonel de Salabery [sic],<sup>2</sup> a gentleman well acquainted with the country, and with the manners and feelings of the inhabitants. These gentlemen are fully informed of the beneficent intentions of the Canadian Government, and can disabuse the minds of the people of the misrepresentations made by designing foreigners.

They have also sent Mr. Donald A. Smith,<sup>3</sup> the Chief Agent of the Hudson Bay Company at Montreal, as a Special Commissioner. From his position as an officer of the Company, he is likely to obtain ready access to Fort Garry, where he can strengthen the hands of Governor McTavish (now weakened by long illness) and arrange with the loyal and well-affected portion of the people for a restoration of order.

It is confidently hoped that the measures taken will succeed, but in the event of failure, the Government are making preparations, by the construction of boats, and otherwise, for sending a military force in early spring. In these efforts the Canadian Government are glad to believe that they will have the hearty co-operation of Her Majesty's Government, and the Hudson Bay Company.

[Signed]

JOHN A. MACDONALD

16th December, 1869.

<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on p. 239.

<sup>2</sup> See note 3 on p. 241.

<sup>3</sup> See note 2 on p. 239.

XIV: LETTER FROM GOVERNOR WILLIAM MACTAVISH TO W. G. SMITH, ON DEMANDS OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT UPON THE HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY.<sup>1</sup>

[*Printed from the Archives of the Hudson's Bay Company,*  
*A 12/45, folios 350-53*].

Recd. Jany 27/70  
William Gregory Smith Esquire  
Secretary  
Hudson's Bay House  
London

Fort Garry, Red River,  
25 December 1869

Sir

I regret very much to have to inform you that, within the last few days, matters here have assumed a worse appearance than they had previously worn. On the evening of the 17th Instant Louis Riel, the apparent leader of the malcontents, came to me, and after going over what they had done, informed me that, notwithstanding my own opinion, as well as that of others, his party were determined to proceed in the course they had taken, and that to do so money was a necessity; that, before going to other parties, apparently friends, but whose object in assisting the malcontents might not be disinterested, and whose interference in the matter would certainly lead to great disorders in the country, he thought it better to come to me and propose that the Company should make a loan (possibly about £1,000) to the "Provisional Government."

I, of course, pointed out to him that the Government he alluded to was not a Government, but simply a body of men supported by a section of a section of the people of the country; to which he replied that the Government had been proclaimed, but was not yet fully formed, though quite strong enough to attain its objects; that he, as well as the other Red River people engaged in it, were anxious for Canadian connection, but that, if forced to look for aid from foreigners, there could be no means of

<sup>1</sup> Governor Mactavish's letter of December 25 throws considerable light on the position of Riel and the Provisional Government in the second half of December. The Governor's suspicion that the purpose of the leaders was annexation to the United States is a measure of the strength of American influence at this time. It was a suspicion Donald A. Smith was to share: P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 102, Smith to Macdonald, January 4, 1870.

treating with Canada. On those grounds a Loan from the Company would be a great advantage to the Country.

I pointed out to him that, for any difficulties he might create, or their consequences, the Company could not be held responsible; as I had from the beginning pointed out to him that the steps he was taking were unnecessary as well as illegal, and could eventually only lead to the injury of the people he had induced to support him.

On the 20th Instant, he, with two members of his "Council" waited on me, and formally demanded a Loan for the use of the "Provisional Government." We had a good deal of conversation on the subject, in course of which, I said I did not consider I could entertain their proposition. However it ended for the time in their appointing the morning of the 22nd Instant for another call on me. On that day they again came, and after some discussion and unwillingness to come to the worst, they left me, fully satisfied I would not make the Loan. Before leaving however, Riel made a threatening speech, informing me the Company had abused and kept down the halfbreeds, and ended by selling them with the Country; and that it was full time the halfbreeds got their redress.

On leaving me, he, accompanied by Mr. O'Donoghue, whom I have before mentioned, went to the Office, having sent some of their people to bring Mr. John H. McTavish thither as a prisoner. They took the key from his pocket and opened the Safe, the contents of which amounted in all to £1090,4,0. Of this sum, £262 was in old H B Notes, tied up as cancelled, £757 in H B Promissory Notes, and the remainder in American cash money, gold and silver coin. The safe and its contents were then carried off.

Yesterday John Bruce, who is president of the Provisional Government, took a considerable quantity of goods from the Sale Shop here to pay the people who have been engaged in support of the disturbances;<sup>1</sup> but, though there had been kept a full account of the goods so taken, I am unable to say at present to what value they amounted; but I feel certain I understate the cost of this business to the Trade when I put it at £4000 to this date, with every likelihood of the loss of every thing in the Establishment as well as at White Horse Plain, before Spring.

The consequences of those disturbances will be most disastrous to the Trade, as they will render it impossible to make arrangements for next

<sup>1</sup> This passage throws doubt on Begg's belief that illness was a factor in Bruce's resignation from the presidency.



year's business,<sup>1</sup> and will besides endanger the Company's property in every part of the Country.<sup>2</sup> I do not well see how the matter can be dealt with, as I do not believe a force can be organized in the Country to cope with the party now in arms and those who will certainly join them ; at least, to do so will require considerable time and a competent staff of officers to train recruits ; troops sent either by England or Canada will not be allowed to pass through the United States, as, even should the Federal Government consent, the troops, in passing through the Western States, would certainly be mobbed. The United States alone has the power to make its wishes felt by the malcontents here, and it is most likely that such assistance could only be got by the prospect of the early Annexation of the Country, and though, I doubt not, this will be its ultimate destiny, there would probably be objections to it at present. Indeed it is now [not?] for the interest of settlers here that annexation should take place at once.<sup>3</sup>

I am told that Colonel De Salaberry and the Revd M. Thibeault [sic],<sup>4</sup> a priest who had been in the country for nearly thirty years, but who went to Canada about 18 months ago, are now at Pembina on their way hither, as emissaries from the Canadian Government. Doubtless Mr. Thibeault has been chosen on account of his supposed influence with the halfbreeds, but I fear it will be found insufficient, as I believe Bishop Taché alone has influence sufficient to detach the men from their present leaders, and even he might fail ; and *as I before said*, I am of opinion that the Leaders or their advisers have fully made up their minds to have nothing to do with Canada.

In consequence of the Safe robbery, I have given up redeeming H.B. Promissory Notes here. On the face of all Notes they are declared redeemable only at York Factory, and we had better adhere to that, as we would find that the business could only be carried on under the surveillance of an armed guard, who would take possession of the Notes so soon as they were in our hands.

I have the honor to be

Sir,

Your obedient servant

W. MACTAVISH

<sup>1</sup> That is, through lack of trade goods.

<sup>2</sup> By similar plundering by Indians and *métis* elsewhere ; see No. xxvi below.

<sup>3</sup> The original reads " now " ; the sense seems to require " not ".

<sup>4</sup> See notes 1 and 2 on p. 239.

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P.S. I find I have omitted to say that, towards the end of the conversation with Riel, on the 22<sup>nd</sup> *Instant*, he had informed me that the amount of the Loan he wished for his Government would be about £10,000 *Sterling*!

I beg to enclose a copy of Letter received from the Honorable William McDougall, dated Pembina, 16 December 1869.<sup>1</sup>

W. M.

### XV: MEMOIRS OF LOUIS SCHMIDT, SECRETARY OF THE FIRST PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, CHAPTER 5, 1868-1870.<sup>2</sup>

[*From a typed copy in the Public Archives of Manitoba*].

[Translation]

Thursday, January 18, 1912, No. 46, page 4.

As at my return from college in 1861,<sup>3</sup> I found the colony all upset. Famine threatened it. The grasshoppers had invaded it the preceding year, they had deposited their eggs, and the greedy young ones which would hatch would devour all the vegetation.

It is not when they first come that the grasshoppers do the most damage. Then the grain is nearly ripe, and a good portion is always saved from their attacks.

A little while after they come, they begin to lay their eggs. The laying done, they make off in serried ranks, torpidly dragging themselves until some obstacle, a wall for instance, stops them. There they pile up and die.

But the following year, the little ones which come out of the ground

<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed in C.S.P., 1870 (12), McDougall to Mactavish, December 16, 1869. It informed Mactavish of McDougall's withdrawal from Pembina.

<sup>2</sup> The memoirs of Louis Schmidt were written in 1912 and published in *Le Patriot de l'Ouest* in that year. The original version was accidentally burned before publication; a loss, because the second version, printed here, was shortened by the wearied author. The dates appearing in this version are those of the issues of *Le Patriot de l'Ouest*. The memoirs cover the years 1844-1885; only the portion dealing with 1868-1870 is reproduced here. The text is transcribed from a typescript in P.A.M., but, through the courtesy of Mr. L. H. Thomas, Provincial Archivist of Saskatchewan, it has been checked with a microfilm of the original. Schmidt was, of course, an eye witness; and, despite the lapse of over forty years, his recollections are generally accurate. He was not a trusted intimate of Riel.

<sup>3</sup> Schmidt, with Louis Riel and Daniel McDougall, had been sent to college by Bishop Taché in 1858. Schmidt attended the Collège de Saint-Hyacinthe, but ill health forced him to abandon his course in 1861. See note 2 on p. 245.

eat everything in sight. It is useless to sow the fields. As fast as the grain grows, it is eaten.

(To be continued)

Thursday, January 25, 1912, No. 47, page 4.

The buffalo hunt was about done too for the people of Red River.

All the buffalo were on the other side of the Missouri, or pushed back towards the West in Montana, on the bank of the Milk River and beyond.

In these circumstances, the authorities of the country, Bishop Taché at their head, began to organize relief committees and to write to charitable people in the neighbouring countries of the United States and Canada. The Hudson Bay Company also subscribed a large sum of money, and so famine was averted, or at least its ravages were very much limited.

I also found a great change among the people. They had begun to talk politics, even our own folk. That word was quite new then : it would not be believed to-day, when everybody, even to the Indian and the poorest cook's mate, knows it and uses it.

The Canadian Confederation had just been formed, and it already wished to expand. A law passed in the last Parliament authorized the government to acquire the western Territory in order to unite them to Canada.<sup>1</sup> A bargain had been struck by which the Hudson's Bay Company, sovereign of those countries, yielded all its rights, on condition that three hundred thousand pounds be paid to it, and Red River was to become part of Canada.

That was what they were talking about. Some rejoiced and expected no end of wonders. Others, more prudent, or not understanding anything about it, kept their counsel or expressed great reserve.

#### ARRIVAL OF RIEL—1868.

It was in these circumstances, towards the end of the summer, that there arrived in St. Vital my friend Riel, come from the States.<sup>2</sup>

I went to see him shortly after, and he asked me to live with him for some time, which I did very gladly.

Our conversations naturally turned to the changes which were preparing for our country. We also worked out some plans. But as we knew nothing definite yet about the intentions of the Canadian government, we had to wait on events, quite determined just the same

<sup>1</sup> Canada : Statutes, 32-33 Victoria, C.3, 1869.

<sup>2</sup> Riel reached St. Boniface on July 26, 1868.

to occupy ourselves with public affairs when the time should come.

We are now in the month of February, 1869. Provisions begin to fail in many places. We must find new ways of obtaining them.

Several of my readers know that the Red River is full of fish in summer, but I do not know whether any one had up to that time attempted to take fish in winter, under the ice. That was what people are going to do now.

I do not know who had the idea first, but he had a good one at all events for soon there was not a place left to run the nets; everyone was at it. It is near the mouth of the Assiniboine, a little up the Red, that the fishing was done. It was wonderful to see the quantity of fish that was taken. It was a veritable providence.

I had the occasion then to profit by the knowledge I had acquired at Rabasca<sup>1</sup> in that kind of work, and my experience was useful to several others.

It was also about that time that I received at last, by the good offices of Bishop Taché, the money which the American government owed me for my services among the Sioux in 1864.<sup>2</sup> Poor Father André,<sup>3</sup> then in the Saskatchewan since 1865, had not ceased since his trip to St. Paul, to make repeated requests that his men should be paid, and he had at last succeeded in his efforts, which was a great relief to him.

I used that money to buy some oxen and carts, and on the departure of the regular cart brigades for the United States, I was of the number of tripmen.

We went, as was said then, *to the flour*. The merchants and others who had money bought it and we freighted it for half the load. We went as far as Sauk Rapids where there were some mills, some 50 or 60 miles this side of St. Cloud.

On my return, I went to live in a house that Bishop Taché had loaned me up the river, and I took with me, my mother and two sisters, who had always lived with my grandfather.

It was at the completion of this trip that coal oil lamps were seen for the first time in the country.

After the haying, I set out once more for the United States, and I went

<sup>1</sup> Athabaska, where Schmidt was born and reared.

<sup>2</sup> Schmidt, with Père André (see next note) had gone on a mission to the Sioux after the campaign of 1863, in the service of the American forces.

<sup>3</sup> The Reverend Alexis André, O.M.I., 1833-1897, Breton priest, stationed at St. Joseph's in the early 1860's; see Bénédict, *Taché*, I, p. 478; in 1884-1885 he was at Prince Albert on the Saskatchewan.



as far as St. Cloud. It was during this trip that the troubles broke out in Red River, to which I am now going to devote some pages.

### THE TROUBLES OF RED RIVER, 1869-1870.

No one, however, should expect me to write a complete history of those famous events, of which the echo soon spread as far as the old countries.

I am not a historian and do not do the work of a historian. These notes written in haste and without preparation—my style reveals it—entirely authentic though they are, are rather fleeting and personal impressions than an ordered composition.

(To be continued)

Thursday, February 1, 1912, No. 48, page 4.

Several writers have recounted the troubles which preceded the entrance of the British colony of Assiniboia into the Canadian Confederation, and most of them are exact enough. They differ only in their interpretations according as they are English or French or partisan.

For those who wish to study the matter thoroughly, I would recommend, among the English, the work of Alexander Begg<sup>1</sup>—rare now, I am told—and among the French, those of Abbé Geo. Dugas,<sup>2</sup> both witnesses of the events they narrate. Then the more recent writings of Rev. Father Morice, O.M.I.,<sup>3</sup> who sums up all the others and corrects them on occasion, and who includes some hitherto unpublished details of great interest with respect to the Fenian invasion, in the fall of 1871.

For myself, besides my personal impressions, and while following the chronological course of events, I shall dwell especially on some episodes which have been passed over almost in silence, or which have not been sufficiently emphasized.

That said, I come to my narrative.

<sup>1</sup> Presumably *The Creation of Manitoba*, but perhaps also *The History of the North-West*, I-III (Montreal, 1894).

<sup>2</sup> The Reverend Georges Dugas; see note 3 on p. 225; author of *L'ouest Canadien* (Montreal, 1905) and *L'histoire véridique du mouvement de métis* (Montreal, 1905) and other works. The text refers to *L'histoire véridique*.

<sup>3</sup> The Reverend A. G. Morice, *L'histoire de l'église catholique dans l'ouest canadien*, I-IV (Montreal, 1909) and "Aux sources de l'histoire de Manitoba", I, in *La Revue de Nouvelle France* (Quebec, 1906).

Be it said first of all that from the beginning of the winter of '68-9, the Canadian government, under the pretext of relieving the distress of the people whom famine threatened, had sent some of its employees to open the road called Dawson's, at Oak Point.

This was the first irregularity. The country was not Canadian, and it was an act of unheard-of offhandedness for a government to undertake public works in a foreign country, without the consent of the authorities of the place, who were for us the government of Assiniboia.<sup>1</sup> The country had been sold, it will be said, but it was necessary to wait, to say the least, until the true proprietor, the Queen, had delivered it.<sup>2</sup> Now, the proclamation did not appear until July 15, 1870.

The designs of Canada soon became clear. It wished to introduce itself into the country, as into a vacant land, without concerning itself any more with the people who lived in it than if they had not existed. For some months later, it sent certain surveyors, under the orders of Colonel Dennis, who began to run lines on all sides, without bothering to discover whether they were on private property or not.<sup>3</sup>

The half-breeds, however, under the leadership of Riel, began to bestir themselves. Having taken counsel with persons wiser and more experienced than themselves, they held at first small secret meetings, then more numerous assemblies, and decided to oppose by all means the entrance of the governor that Canada was sending and whose approaching arrival was announced. They wanted above all to have sure guarantees that their rights would be protected. This was the base on which they took their stand, to rise and take all measures required for success in their undertaking. This occurred in the month of October, 1869.

Their first act of note, done to show that they were in earnest, was to stop the surveys which were being made in St. Vital, in the very heart of the French half-breed settlements. Then they went to place themselves at the Stinking River, near the mission of St. Norbert, where they barricaded the public highway, to prevent any one passing there without their permission. It was the road which led to the American frontier, by which the new governor, Wm. McDougall, had to come.

<sup>1</sup> Governor Mactavish was asked for, and gave, permission for the work to proceed : P.A.C., Department of Public Works, Snow to McDougall, February 8, 1869 ; A.H.B.C., A 12/45, Mactavish to W. G. Smith, November 11, 1868.

<sup>2</sup> The terms of the transfer had not been agreed on when the party under Snow was despatched.

<sup>3</sup> A misunderstanding of what the surveyors were doing ; see Introduction.

The Canadian party, that is to say, the employees already come in, and all the new settlers who had come, the one after the other, in the last years, from the Province of Ontario, that party was taken aback by all these bold actions. They saw themselves forestalled, and perhaps debarred from achieving their ends, which were to see the new administration begin to function as quickly as possible, to influence it, to direct it in the way they wished, and, by that means make of the colony an English province in the image of Ontario.

They betook themselves to the local magistrates to have these actions suppressed which they called illegal and subversive of public order.<sup>1</sup> The hypocrites! They were all, or almost all, despisers of the law, breakers of prison even, and they betook themselves to the authorities!

Their efforts, as one would expect, had no effect. The Council of Assiniboia met in emergency session and decided to warn McDougall that he should not enter the colony before steps were taken to allay the discontents.

I come for a moment to my own trip. On the return road, we camped one evening with the new governor and his party which was not travelling with oxen, as we were. It was at Grand Forks.

McDougall was without doubt aware of what was going on at Red River, for one of our folk, having strolled over to their fire, made there the acquaintance of Mr. Provencher the secretary of the new governor. While putting the most philosophic face possible on the situation, he appeared in spite of himself somewhat disturbed at the turn events were taking. Poor Provencher, he was not to see Fort Garry on his first trip to Red River, for he went no further than St. Norbert, farther at that than his master!

(To be continued)

Thursday, February 8, 1912, No. 49, page 4.

When we passed Pembina, the governor was in the English fort, but he was not to remain there long. A half day farther on, at Deux Petites Pointes,<sup>2</sup> we met the *métis*, Lépine at their head, who went and told him to return to American soil, which he had to do, much against his will.

Finally I reached Winnipeg on November 5. On stopping at the fort, which the *métis* had held for three days, I recognized one of my neighbours

<sup>1</sup> A reference to the affidavit sworn before Dr. William Cowan by W. F. Hyman : C.S.P., 1870 (12).

<sup>2</sup> A landmark on the Red River north of the present town of Letellier.

who was standing guard near the little east gate. I went to shake hands and to have a bit of a chat. I noticed that he spoke almost in a low voice, and as if I had interrupted his prayers, for if he had his gun on his shoulder he had also his beads in his hand. I heard no noise within the walls. I learned later that it was orders.

As the undertaking was a serious one and full of perils, the *métis*, faithful to their part, had begun it with prayer and meditation. How lively the faith still was among them! How could they have failed to be good soldiers?

Some days later when I had put a little order into things at home, I went myself to live in the fort with Riel.

Before even entering the Fort, and from their first organization at St. Norbert, the *métis* had formed a council composed of one or two principal citizens of each parish, with John Bruce, of St. Boniface, as President, and Louis Riel, of St. Vital, as Secretary. This council sat, as it were, permanently, for events moved rapidly and became more and more grave.

It is not to be thought that the Canadian party confessed itself already defeated, or remained inactive. On the contrary, McDougall at Pembina, Dennis at Portage la Prairie and elsewhere, and Schultz at Winnipeg, were organizing a counter-revolution, and were attempting to draw to them the old English settlers of the colony, who had remained practically neutral so far, although a trifle hostile to the French half-breeds.

The first care of the council then, after its entry into the Fort, was to win over to them the old English settlers. For this purpose letters were sent to them, explaining our attitude and views, and asking them to send representatives to confer with us, in order to come to a common understanding on the terms to be asked of Canada before allowing it to enter the country.

That invitation was accepted, and on the day set, November 16, twelve English delegates met with those of the *métis*.

But, after several days of deliberations, interrupted by all sorts of incidents, the convention had to be dissolved, having failed to reach an understanding.

Riel resolved then to act alone with the *métis*. Already, he had taken possession of the stores and of most of the buildings of the Company. He called up all the men he could, and put himself, in a word, in a condition to make a front against all his enemies.

He gave the name of Provisional Government to his first council, and



continued to call himself the secretary of it, although he was in fact the real president. He took that title, however, some days later, and I was named his secretary.

Riel was a born orator. His character predisposed him to that. By nature enthusiastic and a little exalted, his speeches made a great impression on crowds. And then, the cause he had to defend—a cause noble and just to a rare degree—was already in itself a natural stimulus to enthusiasm. Thus, it is not astonishing to see the effect that he had on simple and honest natures, such as were those of the *métis*, when he revealed to them their most sacred rights trampled under foot in the invasion of their country by Canada.

He was also at times a poet. After his departure from college, and before he came back to Red River, he had lived for some time with Louis Fréchette in Chicago. There they both wrote verse, one, Fréchette attempting to model himself on Hugo, the other on Lamartine.<sup>1</sup>

He also formed another Council, called the Military Council, composed of the captains of the different brigades, and having Ambroise Lépine at its head with the title of Adjutant General.<sup>2</sup>

Lépine was quite the opposite of Riel.

Cold, positive, he was never carried away, as we say today. But he was bravery itself. Of superb appearance, endowed with extraordinary muscular strength, he was made to command and he became quite naturally the leader of the soldiers of the revolution. Like all superior men, he was mild with smaller ones. But he did not spare the big and strong.

One day, a captain, Toussaint Lussier,<sup>3</sup> a giant, the strongest man in Red River, had been sent to bring back a prisoner, one of the principal rebels among the *métis*, William Dease.<sup>4</sup> He came back empty-handed. Lépine gave him a frightening reprimand and treated him almost as a coward. I would have thought that Lussier was going to fly at him.

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> This point is of great interest; see Introduction. The Provisional Government existed primarily to treat with Canada. The government of the country, so far as it was attempted, was done by the Military Council under martial law until May 9, 1870. Riel actually remained commander of the forces until January, signing himself "Commandant" in a note addressed to Colonel de Salaberry on December 27, 1869: P.A.C., Tupper Papers, 1862-1879, Riel to de Salaberry, December 27, 1869.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 on p. 271.

<sup>4</sup> See note 3 on p. 306.

Poor Elzéar Goulet,<sup>1</sup> who had so sad an end, very much resembled Lépine. He had all his qualities and all his defects. He was superior to him in his pleasant manner and was the idol of the soldiers.

(To be continued)

Thursday, February 15, 1912, No. 50, page 4.

O'Donoghue<sup>2</sup> was coldness itself although his Irish blood boiled continually in his breast. That blood rose to his face when things did not go as he wished. He was brave also.

Now that the main lines of the insurrection have been sketched, I am going to relate only the most outstanding facts, for I see that it would take a volume to tell all, and I have not the leisure or the disposition to do it. Moreover, this work is becoming extremely tiresome to me, and I may be excused if I shorten it as much as possible.

A little after the dissolution of the convention of November 16, McDougall issued a proclamation in the name of the Queen announcing the annexation of the North-West Territories to Canada. It was done without authority, and he was disavowed later. But it was enough to make a great impression on the hesitant English, and even on some *métis*—French—who had not yet dared to join Riel. These called themselves the loyalists and we were the rebels. After McDougall's proclamation Governor Mactavish published in his turn the dissolution of the government of Assiniboia.<sup>3</sup>

This was a difficult crisis to surmount, but we faced up to it as to the others. We replied to McDougall's proclamation with another which we had printed at Winnipeg (and where I helped the Rev. Father Allard<sup>4</sup> to correct the proofs). Our proclamation appeared December 8.

But before going farther, let me tell of an event which soon gave us prestige among a great number of people, but which also increased, if that were possible, the animosity of our enemies. I speak of the capture of Schultz and his fifty companions on December 7.

<sup>1</sup> Elzéar Goulet ; see note 2 on p. 346 and note 8 on p. 537.

<sup>2</sup> W. B. O'Donoghue ; see note 2 on p. 167.

<sup>3</sup> There is no evidence for this statement, and Schmidt must be presumed to be entirely in error. Mactavish undoubtedly believed, as did everyone, that his government had come to an end.

<sup>4</sup> The Reverend Joachim Allard, 1838-1917, Canadian ; came to Red River in 1866 ; was curé of St. Charles, 1868 ; later became Vicar General of St. Boniface. Such actions by members of the Catholic clergy go far to explain the Canadian accusation of priestly aid and influence in the Resistance.

The Canadian government had a store of provisions, consisting of barrels of salt pork, flour, etc. in Dr. Schultz's store in Winnipeg. Riel, who had his eye everywhere, noted one day that these provisions were being taken elsewhere, probably to Portage la Prairie to feed our opponents. He forbade the movement and put guards around the store. On his side, Schultz, on the pretext of preventing Riel from himself seizing the provisions, had gathered around him a great number of armed men who came and went without ceasing, and were, in short, only spies and messengers for McDougall, Dennis and the others. Seeing this, Riel laid siege to the house, and all those who came out were made prisoner. It was thus that the famous Thomas Scott was taken.

But Riel's men grew tired of that unending guard in the middle of the severe cold of winter, and they demanded the capture of all these sowers of discord. On December 7 Riel agreed to their wish.<sup>1</sup> He sent a hundred men out from Fort Garry, and two cannons which he had laid on the house, at a short distance. Then he ordered Lépine to go and summon the besieged to surrender. Lépine did not hold back, but Big Morin (Baptiste)<sup>2</sup> who did not think it reasonable to send one man alone into this den, offered to accompany him, and both set out. It was a solemn and tragic instant. Would our men come back alive out of the house?

Finally, at the end of some minutes, which seemed very long to us, the terms of surrender were signed, the men were disarmed and conducted within the walls of the Fort.

December 8, 1869, was a memorable day for us. Besides the capture of fifty prisoners and the issuing of our proud proclamation, we were that day to run up the new flag of the Provisional Government.<sup>3</sup> That flag has been preserved. It had a white background with fleurs de lis and shamrock, and a large buffalo in relief, in the lower part.<sup>4</sup>

Shortly after High Mass, which several of us were able to go to hear at the cathedral, and dinner, the ceremonies began. There was already a flagstaff in the Fort, on which had been hoisted, on Sundays, the Company's flag. It is there that we put ours.

<sup>1</sup> A significant point. It was the guards who were to demand the punishment of Scott later.

<sup>2</sup> Baptiste Morin.

<sup>3</sup> The flag of the Provisional Government was first raised on December 10, with an accompanying celebration.

<sup>4</sup> Where the flag was preserved is a well-kept secret. Schmidt's description is yet another of this famous flag, but he surely must have seen it clearly and often.

Riel delivered a fine oration, such as he was accustomed to make, and I also made there my first "speech"! Moreover, to celebrate that great day, Riel allowed his soldiers for the first time to drink a toast in honour of the new flag. He had a great kettle brought out full of liquor, with a goblet at its side, and each helped himself to his taste.

I cannot help telling a rather comic episode with respect to that flag.

An old Frenchman lived on the St. Boniface side, who insisted on being called "Doctor" Pillard,<sup>1</sup> and who sympathized completely with us. He came almost every day to the Fort. He lived on the road which I followed on my way home, and I often stopped to see him.

The evening of that day, on my way home, I saw him at his door, gesticulating, and shaking his fist towards the Fort, and uttering some indignant words: "What," he said, "you have run up the white flag, that accursed flag and symbol of tyranny that I have crossed the seas in order never to see again.<sup>2</sup> Ah! that will bring you no good fortune."

(To be continued)

Thursday, February 22, 1912, No. 51, page 4.

"But", I said to him, smiling, "I should think your kings have no monopoly of white. What the devil, you wouldn't wish us to use black, nor red which is too English for us. Come, quiet down, we have no wish to proclaim a monarchy, we have no pretenders here."

And I went away laughing, leaving him silenced. This same Pillard gave me another good laugh later, and if I think of it, I shall speak of him again.

Things continued to happen, however. McDougall and Dennis had set out for Canada. Schultz and very many of the agitators were prisoners. We enjoyed a kind of lull and a little respite. But the storm was near.

The Canadian government began to send us commissioners. These were first the Venerable Father Thibault and Colonel de Salaberry, followed quickly by Donald A. Smith, to-day Lord Strathcona.

The first two were not special commissioners. They came only as friends of the *métis*, and with the purpose of reassuring them as to the intentions of Canada. But they perceived very quickly that their speeches were of little use, and they made hardly any, I assure you.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Pillard is not otherwise recorded, except for a reference in Begg's *Journal*.

<sup>2</sup> The white flag was the flag of the Bourbon kings of France, and Dr. Pillard was a Republican.



The other had some power, and he was the bearer of documents. It was he who almost put the match to the powder.

Donald Smith was not only an old trickster, he was also a Hudson's Bay Company man, of which he became governor a little later, if he were not so already at that time. As such, he had very great influence on the old settlers who had served the Company in such great numbers.

Closely confined as he was in the house of Governor MacTavish, and closely watched by Riel, he contrived to spin some intrigues. He attempted to detach as many *métis* as possible from the popular cause and he used for that purpose the means which succeed so often with weak spirits, even when they are not mercenary: money, which he did not lack. It was then that the true patriots were to be recognized, and the well-tried men. But I anticipate somewhat.

Several days having passed, without his being able to communicate with people as he wished, the Canadian Commissioner asked Riel for permission to produce his credentials and other documents. But as his papers had been left at Pembina, in care of Mr. Provencher, it was necessary to send to fetch them.

Mr. Hardisty,<sup>1</sup> an officer of the Company, was charged with that responsibility, and was escorted by two of Riel's soldiers.

At the same time the foxy Smith had hired three *métis* who so far had not joined the others, without, however, being hostile, to arrange to meet Mr. Hardisty for fear the papers should fall into the hands of Riel. These *métis* were Pierre Léveillé, John Grant and Angus McKay.<sup>2</sup>

Actually, Riel himself had gone out as far as St. Norbert, and would have liked to have these famous papers in order to know what they really contained.

When these two parties met, bloodshed was just averted. Léveillé pointed his pistol at Riel, and he would have fired had Grant not held him back.

Thus Hardisty kept his documents and turned them over to Mr. Smith. But the excitement in the Fort was great when it was seen that Riel had not carried out his design. It was a humiliating check for us, and it was only by a narrow margin that our adversaries missed paying dearly for their resistance.

Moderation, however, resumed its sway, but a sullen resentment

<sup>1</sup> Richard Hardisty; see note 1 on p. 242.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2 on p. 167, note 1 on p. 248 and note 1 on p. 261.

simmered in the bosoms of those concerned, and it would not have taken a great deal to have made it break out.

At length the great meeting of January 19 came, a meeting which may be called a monster rally, considering the scantiness of our population. It had been called to hear the accursed papers read and explained. Early in the morning, vehicles loaded with all sorts and conditions arrived from all sides, and certainly there would be a packed crowd. Who knew what might happen! But Riel had taken his precautions, and had doubled the number of his soldiers.

When you enter the Fort by the South Gate facing on the Assiniboine, there is a large empty space across the back of which a large house stands which is the residence of the officers and clerks.<sup>1</sup> On the sides, great storehouses stand on the left, and the public shop on the right. In the middle of the house, a stairway runs up to a large platform or gallery.

Farther on, to the north and towards the middle of the fort are other buildings, among them, in the centre, a largish two-storey house which is called "the office" and there were the offices of the Company.

It was here that Schultz had been shut up and from which he had escaped. It was here also that Scott was and from which he was taken out to be shot.

Farther on still, and almost at the end of the enclosure, but separated from the rest by a high palisade, was the residence of Governor Mactavish, with other dwelling-houses for his use or for servants. People from outside, who had business with the Governor generally used the North Gate—which is kept as a relic to the present day—to go to see him. But it was a passage not in general use, and the great gate was closed more often than not. Let us now come to the meeting.

(To be continued)

Tuesday, February 27, 1912, No. 52, page 4.

It was in the first empty space I mentioned that the great body of people had gathered, and the "top hats" were on the gallery. Among the latter, besides Donald Smith, Riel and others, there were to be seen the Anglican Bishop and the priest of St. Norbert, M. Ritchot.

The *métis* were placed on the right, along the shop and farther, as far as their barracks and the little East Gate, while at the same time they

<sup>1</sup> Only the northern gateway remains of all that Schmidt very accurately describes here.

extended across the front of the house as far as the stairway without, mixing, however, with the English.

Time ran on and no solution seemed to emerge. Signs of restlessness appeared among the assembly, and certain comings and goings, and some almost angry suggestions which I heard from the side of the *métis*, warned of trouble brewing.

Finally, Mr. Bannatyne, thinking he saw the beginnings of an outbreak, proposed in a very loud voice that forty delegates, half English, and half French, would meet on January 25 to deliberate on the means to be adopted to reach a solution advantageous to the country.

The proposal was accepted at once, and every one withdrew well enough satisfied, and especially happy that all had passed off without a regrettable incident.<sup>1</sup>

About this time Schultz escaped.

He had succeeded in deceiving the watchfulness of his guards, and, having opened a barrack window, he let himself down from it by means of a cord which he had cut from his buffalo robe.

About the same time also there reached us from France a young officer, Captain Gay.<sup>2</sup> His love of adventure had brought him across the seas and prairies in that severe season. He was from Nice, and he had been some time in the service of Garibaldi.

He was well received, and Riel found work for him. He even made him colonel some weeks later, a rank which was confirmed by the French government during the Franco-Prussian war.<sup>3</sup> He was a merry companion and we were soon inseparable.

Other recruits came in from Pembina and St. Joe, among others my old comrades, from Devil's Lake, Gariépy and Poitras.<sup>4</sup>

There was some question for a while of sending me, with these last, to pay a visit to the *métis* of the West, Qu'Appelle, Batoche and elsewhere to inform them and obtain their concurrence in the course which we were pursuing. But that plan had to be abandoned because of diverse circumstances, and I contented myself with sending them, in the form of

<sup>1</sup> Schmidt's description of the mass meeting is lacking in detail and does not wholly convey the tension which existed.

<sup>2</sup> Captain N. Gay ; see note 3 on p. 291.

<sup>3</sup> This last statement is not borne out by a lengthy letter from Gay to Riel later ; P.A.M., Riel Papers, Gay to Riel, August 20, 1872. Gay, however, had become colonel of a French cavalry regiment, to which he taught the tactics of the *métis*.

<sup>4</sup> Baptiste Gariépy ; Poitras ; not otherwise identified. They had accompanied Schmidt on his mission to the Sioux in 1863.

a manifesto, a long letter which I wrote in collaboration with my friend Gay.<sup>1</sup>

I come now to the convention of forty delegates, held on January 27. It was called the "Great Convention" in order not to confuse it with that of November 16.

It was presided over by Judge Black ; William Coldwell and myself were the joint secretaries. Coldwell took the proceedings in shorthand to publish them in the *New Nation*, a newspaper which had just been founded in Winnipeg in the interest of the Provisional Government.

On the side of the English, the discussion was led chiefly by James Ross, Tom Bunn and some others, and on the French side, by Riel and O'Donoghue.

The most striking fact of these debates, and that of which I especially retain the impression, was the timidity of the English in their demands upon Canada. They found almost all our terms excessive, and it was often irritating for our representatives to have to make such efforts to demonstrate to them the legitimacy and justice of our demands. They have been quite content, however, in the long run, to enjoy what we obtained, and they are more exigent to-day in their claims upon the central government.

At length our work drew to an end after several days of deliberation. We had drawn up a list of conditions for our annexation to Canada, which the English called a "Bill of Rights", and at the conclusion of our sessions we had the Canadian commissioner come to submit them to him. To almost every demand he replied, "I think that the government will grant you that."

He then proposed to us that we should send delegates to Ottawa to present our demands and negotiate about our entrance into Confederation. He would himself pay the travelling expenses of the delegates. We accepted his proposals and a little after put them into execution.

The first good result of the Convention, after our understanding about the conditions to be submitted to Canada, was the re-organization of the Provisional Government with the assent and co-operation of the English delegates. These had first sent a delegation to Governor Mactavish for his opinion on the matter. He had told them : "For God's sake, form a government and re-establish peace."

The new government was composed as follows :

President : Louis Riel, Treasurer : W. B. O'Donoghue, Secretary of

<sup>1</sup> See the "Address to the People of the North-West", No. xxv below.



State : Thomas Bunn, Assistant Secretary of State : Louis Schmidt, Adjutant General : Ambroise Lépine, Postmaster : A. G. B. Bannatyne, Chief Justice : James Ross.

The evening which followed that happy outcome was one of gaiety and rejoicing. Bonfires were lighted, and it was one of the few good times that were spent in the Fort.

(To be continued)

Thursday, April 4, 1912, No. 5, page 3.

Mr. Bunn then took up his residence in the midst of us as representative of the English on the Executive, and the delegates to be sent to Ottawa were nominated. They were Judge Black, Rev. J. N. Ritchot and Alfred Scott.

But before their departure took place, it was necessary to confront a new crisis, and new troubles.

Schultz, as soon as he escaped, had his vengeance to slake, as did Scott, who had escaped also. The first down Red River, and the other at the Portage, the source of the most turbulence and hatred of the Provisional Government, set themselves to rally a following to come to deliver an assault on the Fort, to release the prisoners and wipe out Riel and his people.

These two parties met at the church called "Middlechurch", of the parish of St. Paul, some ten miles from us. From there they sent a kind of *ultimatum*. One of their envoys was Thomas Norquay, the brother of John who became well known later. This was on February 16.

A great stir occurred among us, as you may well believe, and all preparations were made to repel the attack. We had put some men in the Bishop's palace, from which the first assault might be made, because of the woods which, running from that place as far as the English settlements east of the river, would hide the movements of the enemy and his approach.

Riel replied to the letter of the English firmly and without quibbling.

"We don't want war, but if you really want it, you shall have it. We are ready. We will release the prisoners when we think fit."

Such was the substance of his reply.<sup>1</sup>

But the enemy did not attack. On the contrary, they broke up.

The next day in the course of the morning, a party of the Portage men

<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on p. 312.

was seen passing on the prairies behind Winnipeg. Our men, furious at that long night passed in strain and anxiety, set out to meet them, Lépine at their head as always.<sup>1</sup> They made them all prisoners. There were 48—Scott and Major Boulton among them.

The latter appeared before the Military Council and was condemned to death, but he was spared a short while after, through the intercession of the clergy and other influential persons, well disposed towards the Provisional Government.

But the other, Scott, who did not show the same good disposition, and, on the contrary, acted on all occasions as a veritable fanatic, was shot on March 4. All intervention in his favour was useless. It was besides necessary to give an example of severity, and at the same time of firmness. I shall not pause to try to justify that execution, which the people of Ontario have used for such a long time to raise prejudice and hatred, not only against the *métis* but against all that is French and Catholic. I believe that to-day all impartial men grant that Riel and his government were perfectly right to act as they did. That government was the only one in the country, it had been established and recognized by its representatives.

Had it not the right to put to death like all governments, those who trouble the peace, and contrive only sedition and massacre?

It was on the heels of these events that Bishop Taché arrived, from Rome, from where the Canadian government had had him come. He was the bearer, he too, of letters and documents furnished by the federal authorities. But he came a little late, since all had been arranged now in the colony.

A session of the Legislative Assembly was called, however, to hear His Grace. That Assembly, made up of twenty-eight representatives, English as well as French, had been elected soon after the Great Assembly to pass the regulations and ordinances which the situation required. It revised in due course those of the former Council of Assiniboia, and put them into force again.

On March 15, Bishop Taché was invited to lay his views and those of Canada before that gathering, and in his honour half of the prisoners were set at liberty, as the remainder were some time after.

<sup>1</sup> The only reason given for the capture of the Portage party by Schmidt is again the impatience of the *métis*. By some O'Donoghue is said to have led the party; apparently Lépine led as Adjutant-General, with O'Donoghue along as Captain of the day.

It was then that the delegates set out for Ottawa. We shall see what new complications await us on their account.

But before telling of these, let us say that on April 9 Riel published a proclamation, declaring that all was once more normal in the country, the public highways were open to all, that the Hudson's Bay Company was going to open its shop to the public again, that it would put its notes in circulation as in the past redeemable in gold. Finally, a complete amnesty was granted to all those who were willing to obey the recognized authority.<sup>1</sup>

After that, nearly all the *métis* returned to their houses.

The winterers<sup>2</sup> arrived, and traded as ordinarily with the Company.

All was quiet at last, and one breathed easily, after so many troubles and so much anxiety.

It is about this time that I place the Pillard incident, of which I said a word above.

(To be continued)

Thursday, April 11, 1912, No. 6, p. 3.

The doctors of the settlement, seeing that he drew their clientèle from them and questioning whether he was qualified as a doctor, requested Riel to require him to submit to an examination to make sure of his medical knowledge.

Doctors Cowan, Bird and O'Donnell were chosen to make this enquiry, and as Captain Gay knew English perfectly, he was named secretary of the commission and interpreter at the same time, for Dr. Pillard spoke only French.

The commissioners sat in one of the rooms in the house in which we were living, on the second floor, and they held only one session. It was, indeed, somewhat short and came to nothing.

Pillard was unwilling to answer any of their questions. To each of them he retorted with such buffoonery or insults that the interpreter dared not translate literally. He became more and more angry, finally wanting to throw all the commissioners out of the window.

They had to let him go, and he continued to render his medical services to those who asked for them.

On leaving that farcical session, Captain Gay hurried to come to tell

<sup>1</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, April 9, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> The winterers, that is the hunters and traders who had passed the winter on the plains in pursuit of their occupations.

me all the details and nothing delighted us so much as we recalled not only the sallies of Pillard, but the shocked and discomfited mien of the grave commissioners. Let us come now to more serious things, to our delegates.

Messrs. Ritchot and Scott had set out together some days before Judge Black.

They learned on the road that the Orangemen of Toronto wished to give them a rough reception, even to *lynch* them as they passed through their city. Then they changed their route on the advice of the federal authorities, and travelled by Buffalo, from where a member of the Dominion Police escorted them as far as Ottawa. But they were taken into custody there, and forced to submit to a summary examination as accomplices in the murder of Scott. The charge was dismissed, of course, and they were released very quickly, but the insult remained.

This news threw us into the greatest indignation, and foreshadowed the treatment to which we were to be subjected later on the part of the hotheads of Ontario.

### LOYALTY TO ENGLAND.

The Americans profited by these circumstances to renew their constant pressure upon us, in order to shake us from our British allegiance and draw us into the Republic.<sup>1</sup>

Large sums of money were offered to Riel, as well as men and munitions to repel the Canadian troops, in case they sought in spite of us to penetrate into the country.

But Riel held firm, and refused to turn from the course he had laid down from the beginning. His motto was : do what you ought, happen what may.

It has been suggested that it is to Bishop Taché especially that the preservation of Red River and the other settlements of the West is owing. And Bishop Ireland said two years ago, to the Archbishop of St. Boniface: "Without Bishop Taché, it would be the star-spangled banner, and not the Union Jack that one would see floating above your palace."<sup>2</sup>

It is an exaggeration. There is no doubt that Bishop Taché gave his

<sup>1</sup> A reference, it may be, to the visit of ex-Governor Marshall to Red River on April 24, 1870 ; see Introduction, pp. 127-128.

<sup>2</sup> A reference to Archbishop Ireland's speech in St. Boniface on October 4, 1908, in which he uttered the often-quoted statement attributed to him by Schmidt.



counsel, and that it was listened to. But His Grace was preaching to the converted.

And is one to believe that these were the first solicitations that we had from the Americans?

No, no, let us not deprive Riel of the merit which belongs to him. This does not diminish at all the glory of Bishop Taché.

And then, his conduct eighteen months later, during the Fenian invasion after he had been so odiously deceived by the Canadian government, persecuted and hunted by every one who was English in Manitoba, did he not show his unchangeable fidelity and even his devotion to England?

Riel was profoundly Catholic and our religion commends to us fidelity to our kings.

Our delegates, meanwhile, set themselves as soon as possible to confer with the ministers at Ottawa who had been specially charged to negotiate with them, Sir John Macdonald and Sir Geo. Cartier, and they succeeded after several days of consultation in obtaining what we had demanded. From that agreement emerged the Manitoba Act, assented to on May 3, and which then became the charter of our rights.

There remained, however, the approval of the Provisional Government.

As soon as he arrived, Mr. Ritchot came to give an account of his mission. I do not know what had become of the other delegates. The Legislative Assembly had been convoked to hear him, and when that was done (on the invitation of my old college friend,<sup>1</sup> by a little note which he had sent to me secretly) I proposed, seconded by Tom Bunn, that the arrangements concluded by our delegates were approved by the Assembly, and that the colony of Red River would enter into the Canadian Confederation under the name of the Province of Manitoba.

That motion was carried in the midst of applause from the whole room. Then congratulations and thanks of the most sincere kind were bestowed on the priest of St. Norbert and his fellow-delegates and every one withdrew content, for our work was partly finished.

(To be continued)

Thursday, April 18, 1912, No. 7, page 3.

Sir Geo. Cartier had asked Riel, by Mr. Ritchot, to be good enough to govern the country until the arrival of the Canadian authorities, and that was what he did until August 23.

<sup>1</sup> That is, Riel.

Before coming to that disastrous day, let me say a word of my friend Captain Gay.

As soon as the declaration of war between France and Prussia came to his ears, he set out without losing a minute.<sup>1</sup> That little devil of a man dreamed only of wars and battles. Several months later, he wrote me from Tours, that the peace, the melancholy peace, was made and his title of Colonel given by Riel, had been ratified by the French Republic.

I am going now to touch on a subject which I have not yet raised, and which was going to be the subject of very many proceedings, of negotiations and deceptions. I wish to speak of the amnesty.

It was a condition *sine qua non* of our entry into Confederation, and it had been promised, but by word of mouth only, first to Bishop Taché, then to our delegates. It had been said to them "it is an understood thing and already settled in London. You are going to find at home on your arrival, the official papers according the amnesty: these papers are already on the way."<sup>2</sup>

It was by these solemn promises that everybody was taken in, and, as the Abbé Dugas says "we could have been deceived by less."

Properly speaking, and if we had been dealing with a strong and honest government, we wouldn't have needed that amnesty. Only the guilty are amnestied, and we were not guilty. But it was a safeguard against the machinations of our enemies who would not fail to besiege and importune the courts on our account.

Mr. Ritchot had no sooner returned than Bishop Taché, seeing he had nothing with him but verbal promises, set out for Ottawa. Alas! poor bishop, that journey like many others still was to be futile, and served only to cause him distress and moral anguish without end. He was to be accused of breaking his word, of having connived with the Canadian government to deceive his people.

The ministers could not grant the amnesty, owing to the fanaticism of Ontario, that same fanaticism which was to cause Riel to be executed in 1885, and which took away our schools in 1905.<sup>3</sup>

Bishop Taché arrived then without it, as we feared, and Wolseley's troops being on the point of arriving, accompanied by a band of fanatics, we had taken our precautions in order not to be surprised in the Fort.

<sup>1</sup> France declared war on Prussia on July 19, 1870. <sup>2</sup> Dugas, *L'histoire véridique*, p. 189.

<sup>3</sup> By the Acts creating the new provinces in 1905 the right to separate schools was much diminished.

## ARRIVAL OF THE CANADIAN TROOPS.

On the morning of August 23 in rainy weather a former officer of the Company, Mr. Stuart,<sup>1</sup> arrived at the Fort at top speed on horseback, to warn us that Wolseley was near. Then, Riel and O'Donoghue crossed to St. Boniface and from there took the road to Pembina.

I had slept at home that night, and coming early for news, I was informed by the ferryman on the Assiniboine, Mr. Dougall,<sup>2</sup> that I had not even time to go and look for some things which I had left in the Fort. Indeed, a little after, I saw the redcoats come around the south-east bastion, and I turned back without delay.

Governor Archibald arrived only some days after, by way of the United States.<sup>3</sup>

So all turned out ill and contrary to what had been promised us. Canada went on to act the traitor to the end, and in a manner unworthy of a civilized people. But history will hold it to account for the conduct, equivocal, evasive and finally treacherous which it followed during the course of these troubles ; I am going to close on that reflection.

XVI: SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE BY JOHN ROSS ROBERTSON TO THE  
*Daily Telegraph* REPORTING AN INTERVIEW WITH HON. WILLIAM  
MCDUGALL IN ST. PAUL.

[*Reprinted from the Daily Telegraph of Toronto, January 6, 1870.*]

[St. Cloud, December 29]

As it is of some importance that the people of Canada should have an idea, from a reliable source, of the causes of discontent in the North-West territory, and knowing that I could look for a straight story from the Governor, I had

## AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. MCDUGALL

this evening, and elicited valuable information as to the difficulties at Pembina and Fort Garry. In conversation, the Governor is unreserved,

<sup>1</sup> "Colonel" J. G. Stewart ; not identified, but possibly James Green Stewart, chief trader, 1853, chief factor, 1869, retired by 1871. Why he warned Riel is unknown.

<sup>2</sup> "Sandy" McDougall, for many years the incompetent but irreplaceable ferryman of the Assiniboine.

<sup>3</sup> An error ; Archibald followed the troops by way of the Winnipeg river.

and speaks with apparent candor on all points connected with the late campaign among the Pembinese. Of course I give but his statements. I have taken the trouble to ascertain from other quarters, from parties disinterested, and I am satisfied that the Governor has given me a correct and unbiassed version of the trouble. After giving me a general idea of the trip to Pembina, I requested information on leading points connected with the rising at Pembina, and in giving Mr. McDougall's answer I will give your readers the ideas in nearly his own words.

Correspondent—What was the main cause of the uprising at Pembina, and refusal to allow you, as the properly constituted power, to take possession of the Nor'-West Territory?

Governor—Well, Sir, the whole secret lies in the fact that the French half-breeds, incited by those who should have known better, were the principal cause of opposition to my entering the territory.

Cor.—What was the object of their opposition?

Gov.—The object of these half-breeds, at least of their leaders, seemed to be to secure from the Canadian Government a large tract of land between Pembina and Fort Garry.

Cor.—Similar to the Canada Clergy Reserve lands?

Gov.—Yes—exclusively for the French; and in order to secure it the leaders had organized the half-breeds, as I have before stated.

Cor.—Do they give any other reason for this conduct?

Gov.—Oh, yes. The half-breeds admit that their action is due to the letters written by Bishop Taché, prior to his departure for Rome to attend the Œcumenical Council.<sup>1</sup>

Cor.—Have not the Americans at Pembina been as deep in the mire as the half-breeds?

Gov.—Yes; the American residents at Pembina have, in union with certain traders at Fort Garry, incited the half-breeds in their attempt to resist my authority.

Cor.—Why should the Americans interfere?

Gov.—I suppose with an idea to the future possession of the country, by annexation.

Cor.—I am informed that there is even a Fenian element existing. Is that correct?

Gov.—Yes. A young man named O'Donohue, a Christian Brother, while attending the secret convention at Winnepeg [sic], made use of

<sup>1</sup> The editor has found no such letters in the records in the Archives of the Archbishopric of St. Boniface, to which he was given unrestricted access.



expressions which at once identified him with the Fenian organization at Chicago. In fact he admitted that certain correspondence had passed between the Head Centres of the Fenian Brotherhood at Chicago and Rielle [sic].

Cor.—Is O'Donohue still connected with the church?

Gov.—No. I understand that he has thrown off his gown, and I know that he is now one of the most active participators in the revolt.

Cor.—What part do the English and Scotch settlers take in the raising [sic] ?

Gov.—None whatever. There is no sympathy on the part of the Scotch and English settlers. All are in favor of recognizing my authority, and were ready to arm and resist the French.

Cor.—Did they not answer to the call?

Gov.—Yes; but when the French promulgated the list of rights, they looked at it in a perfectly natural light. They saw that the demands were not unreasonable, and would benefit themselves as much as the French. The document simply asked for a local legislature, schools, &c., all of which would have been granted in due time; and when in addition the French offered to confer with me, the English laid down their arms and assented to the proposition of the French.

Cor.—What did the deputation do?

Gov.—Nothing; for the simple reason, that they never came near me. The French had artfully promised to send a deputation, but as soon as Col. Dennis disbanded his *posse comitatus*, they declined to listen to any reason whatever, and refused to hold communication with the Governor.<sup>1</sup>

Cor.—Did you give them any chance to meet you?

Gov.—Certainly; I waited for a week, but none came, and then left for St. Cloud.

Cor.—You met Dr. Tupper and Governor Smith?<sup>2</sup>

Gov.—Yes. Before I left I heard that Gov. Smith was coming out,

<sup>1</sup> This charge seems to be unfounded. The failure to send delegates was caused by the disagreement of English and French in the Convention of November 16, on December 1, before Dennis's rising was attempted. There is no evidence that Riel received McDougall's letter of December 13, written on hearing that Riel was to be at Pembina and suggesting a meeting. Dennis's rising was itself a sufficient reason for the French refusal.

<sup>2</sup> Donald A. Smith of the Hudson's Bay Company, who was not Governor at that date.

on account of the refusal of Canada to accept the transfer, and that he was armed with authority to put down any rising.

Cor.—Did you hear of any other means being taken to have the matter righted?

Gov.—Yes. I understood that Father Thibault the Vicar-General of Quebec, had come out endowed with high ecclesiastical authority, and orders to be prompt and decisive in quelling the disturbance, so far as the half-breeds were concerned.

Cor.—What about arming the Indians? Is there any truth in the report?

Gov.—There is just this much truth, that about fifty of them acted as a police force, inside the Stone Fort, under Colonel Dennis, but not outside in any capacity whatever, except as messengers.

Cor.—These Swamp [sic] Indians are a hard set of men. Are they not?

Gov.—No : they are Christians, and moreover half-breeds.<sup>1</sup> They live on farms on the border of the river, are very intelligent and loyal.

Cor.—Are all the Indians loyal?

Gov.—Yes : all the Indian tribes are loyal, and would at a moment's warning take up arms in defence of the British Government. They know full well that if ever annexation took place their chances would be small.

Cor.—You intended, did you not, to recognize Indian claims?

Gov.—Certainly. I intended to look on the Indians as owners of the land, and would treat for it with them as such.

Cor.—We heard rumors in Toronto of the Sioux being on the war path. Is there any truth in that report?

Gov.—None whatever. That is a canard, gotten up by the Americans at Pembina.

Cor.—Our Government are, I suppose, fully posted on all that has transpired?

Gov.—Yes, I have given in detail to the authorities all that transpired from the time I arrived at Pembina till the day on which I left.

Cor.—Well, those men who have acted as leaders of the revolution must have money to carry out their designs.

Gov.—That is just what troubles them. The only means of filling their treasury would be by taxation, and that is what they are afraid to do.

<sup>1</sup> The St. Peter's Indians were Christian but not, generally speaking, of mixed blood.

Cor.—What are our chances of entering the Territory?

Gov.—Not very good ; but as the *Daily Telegraph* was read with a great deal of interest by the residents of Pembina, and as you are indefatigable in getting news, I fancy that they may allow you to pass to Fort Garry. I should not, however, advise you to go, as the hardships of the trip are very great.

Cor.—Are all the American residents at Pembina unfriendly?

Gov.—No ; there is one gentleman, a Mr. Nelson, deputy collector of customs. He has acted in a strictly neutral manner, and I should say that he is an honest official, attending to his duties, and taking no partisan course whatever.

Cor.—You spoke of a Fenian element existing. Do the French half-breeds know anything about such an organization?

Gov.—No, Sir. The fact is that the half-breeds even when questioned, can give no reason whatever for the course taken, except that their priests advised them.

Cor.—You assumed your authority on the 1st December.

Gov.—Yes. I issued certain documents on that day, and on Canadian territory.

Cor.—Of course, at Pembina you were merely a resident?

Gov.—Yes. I was strictly neutral, and anything I did in an official capacity was done on our own territory.

Cor.—You were watched by the Americans?

Gov.—Oh, yes ; every step, every move I took was noted by spies.

Cor.—Did they dread an Indian uprising?

Gov.—Yes. They knew well that the Indians have been always decently treated by the British Government, and that if any trouble did ensue, their chances would not be very good. They swore, knowing this, that if the Americans had to suffer our party should be cleaned out first.

Cor.—Were they offensive in their action towards you?

Gov.—I should say so. My house and people were watched night and day by armed men, and when the Indian story got afloat, they even attempted to coerce me, and ordered that I should send a note to the Indian Chiefs forbidding any such step.

Cor.—These stories were all concocted on American soil?

Gov.—Yes ; they spread the most ridiculous stories. One that I had insulted the Pope ; another that while in Canon [sic]<sup>1</sup> I had killed two

<sup>1</sup> This name, perhaps a misprint for Canada, cannot be explained.

priests, and also that a third priest had lost his life at my hands, on our way to Pembina.

Cor.—Had Rielle any opportunity of communicating with you?

Gov.—Yes; but he did not avail himself of it.

Cor.—Your supplies were cut off?

Gov.—Yes, for about a week we had no communication with our friends on the Canadian side of the frontier.

Cor.—What about James Ross? What part did he take in the trouble?

Gov.—Ross was a delegate to the convention, and although at first he did not take any definite position, yet in the convention he argued the matter with the insurgents, and I believe did his best to bring about an amicable arrangement.

Cor.—Do you propose returning to Ottawa forthwith?

Gov.—Yes, but I shall remain at St. Paul for a few days before proceeding east.

\* \* \*

XVII: LETTER FROM LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHN STOUGHTON DENNIS TO THE *Globe*, JANUARY 12, 1870, ON THE CONDUCT OF THE SURVEYS.

[*Reprinted from the Globe, January 15, 1870*].<sup>1</sup>

Sir,—The dispatch of the 10th inst., from your special Correspondent, dated "Abercrombie, 5th inst.," headed "Real Causes of the Dissatisfaction," proceeds to say, "Moreover Dennis and his staff went surveying through property that had been held for years, and indicated that the whole territory was to be reviewed, and that existing tenures were to be null and void."<sup>2</sup>

I trust your correspondent will find those in the Settlement who will disabuse his mind in this matter; but for fear he may not be allowed to enter the Territory, which I think doubtful, I beg on behalf of myself and the several gentlemen of the surveying staff under me, to say that

<sup>1</sup> With this contemporary account of the purpose and conduct of the surveys of 1869, Dennis's evidence before the Select Committee of 1874 should be compared: *Canada: Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territories* (Ottawa, 1874), pp. 186–187.

<sup>2</sup> *Globe*, January 10, 1870.



your correspondent has been deceived, and that there is not a particle of truth in the statement.

A very important duty under my instructions was to assure people in the Territory, occupants of land, and particularly those who were natives of the country, that they need be under no apprehension whatever of being disturbed in the possession of their property; that, on the contrary, the incoming Government having first extinguished the Indian title by a treaty, just in its character, and which would be honourably carried out, would then immediately take steps to confirm by "Letters Patent" the title of all such parties; and further, that this would be carried into effect as soon as possible after the formation of the Local Government. I made a point constantly of mentioning this as part of the policy in land matters of the Government, explaining over and over again, that should surveyors make their appearance during this winter, surveying the settlements on the Red River and Assiniboine, the object of such survey would be to obtain plans and descriptions, so as to enable the Government to issue deeds to the occupants, and not in any way with the view of disturbing those in possession.

It was conceded by everybody that, inasmuch as at present the title of parties generally consists of a mere entry, in many cases in pencil, of their names in a book kept by the Hudson Bay Company (lately by the way taken forcible possession of by the French party), it would be a great boon to have their titles put in such satisfactory shape.<sup>1</sup>

With regard to surveys proposed to be effected outside of the Settlement up to the close of the season, it was explained that it was for the purpose of locating the principal meridian and base lines so as to place the Government in a position to prepare, by the laying out of a couple of townships, for the emigration which might be expected next season; but that under no circumstances would lands be granted for settlement until the aboriginal claimants to the title had been arranged with.

This policy and no other I kept constantly before the people, and as the gentlemen under me were similarly instructed, I have no reason to believe, and do not believe, that they ever mentioned any other cause [course] as likely to be taken by the incoming Government.

As evidence of my desire to remove any possible misapprehension in the minds of people on this head, I may say that the day following

<sup>1</sup> This was Register B of the Hudson's Bay Company.

my arrival at Winnipeg in August last, I waited upon the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church at the Palace of St. Boniface, and made them thoroughly aware of the above as the intended policy of the Government.

The priests whom I saw—Bishop Taché having left for Rome—expressed their satisfaction with my statement, and in compliance with a request to that effect, promised to explain the same to their people.<sup>1</sup>

I made the intentions of the Government in this particular known also to the officers of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Garry, and was indebted to the courtesy of Governor McTavish for office accommodation of one of my clerks, employed for some weeks (indeed till his work was seized and himself turned out by Riel & Co.,) in copying the maps and records of the Company, so as to facilitate the future confirming of titles.

I procured the insertion of a paragraph in the only newspaper published at the time in the Territory, explaining the above as the policy intended in land matters, which you may see by referring to the files of the *Nor'Wester* for the latter part of August or the beginning of September.<sup>2</sup> Lastly, I informed Mr. Louis Riel, in person, fully on this head. Mr. Riel, whom I had not before seen, called at my office one day about that time, saying that as a native of the country, and one feeling much interest in the change about to take place, and regretting, he said also, that there seemed to be a doubt in the minds of some of the French people as to the manner in which these lands were likely to be dealt with by the Canadian Government, he would be glad if I could enlighten him, so that in turn he could explain matters to these people. I thanked him for the straightforward course he had taken in coming to me as he had, and gave him the same assurance I had given to everybody previously. He expressed himself as delighted to hear of the just and even liberal intentions of the Government towards the occupants of land, and left me, promising that he would take every opportunity of making those intentions known among the class mentioned. The next thing I heard of, Mr. Riel was

<sup>1</sup> See No. v above ; also A.A.S.B., Dugas to Taché, August 24, 1869, and Dugas, *L'histoire véridique*, pp. 43-52.

<sup>2</sup> The *Nor'Wester* of August 24 reported that Dennis had arrived and would commence a square survey ; the official notice of Dennis above referred to may have appeared in that of August 31, which is mutilated ; it is not in the number for September 7.

heading a party of men and stopping Mr. Webb's surveying party; and again, on the Monday [sic] following this, his making an inflammatory speech at the church doors, exciting and urging on the people to resist the entry of the Lieut-Governor, and, as one of his argument, asserting that the Government intended "*to take their farms from the French half-breeds and give them to Canadians.*"

Finally, *no survey whatever of the settled farms had been made or commenced at the time the outbreak occurred.* Mr. Webb's party, at the time it was stopped, was upon a township line outside of the settlement.

So much for myself and staff having caused the present troubles.

Allow me to say a word or two more. There has been what may fairly be called a tolerably free expression of opinion in certain of the Canadian newspapers as to my proceedings lately in connection with affairs in Red River. Unfortunately, these papers drew their information from sources unworthy of confidence. During the most critical period, the first ten or twelve days in December, none but French sympathizers, or men like "Justitia," *perched on the Hudson Bay fence*,<sup>1</sup> could entrust anything to the mail, and the public here were therefore to a great extent obliged to put up with news manufactured and sent on twice a week from Pembina by "Stuttsman & Co.," to St. Cloud and St. Paul, where in turn it was served up with comments warranted to suit the American market. This Stuttsman, I may say, furnished the "Sacred honour," and other material of which the French "Declaration of Independence" is composed, put them together, and then generously went down to Fort Garry to float the "Provisional Government."<sup>2</sup> As to myself, I am content to wait and be judged by the publication in due time of the official papers, which will show that some of the comments to which I refer above were not alone in bad taste, but were positively unjust to me.

Believe me,  
Mr. Editor, yours,  
J. S. DENNIS

Weston, Jan. 12, 1870.

<sup>1</sup> The "Justitia" who wrote in the *Globe* was Alexander Begg, author of the *Journal*.

<sup>2</sup> This was not so; see No. XII, note 1 on p. 447.

XVIII: SPECIAL CORRESPONDENCE BY ROBERT CUNNINGHAM<sup>1</sup> TO  
THE *Globe* ON HIS RECEPTION BY RIEL AT FORT GARRY.[Reprinted from the *Globe*, January 28, 1870].

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[Pembina, January 17, 1870]

Knowing it to be useless to expect to obtain entrance to any hotel in Winnipeg, without the express sanction of President Riel, I drove up to the Fort for the purpose of obtaining that sanction, and intimated to the sentinel that I wanted to see President Riel.

"M. le President is out," said the sentinel, "Would Monsieur go in till his return?"

Monsieur was very tired and would prefer going to a hotel and call on M. le President in the morning.

"Monsieur had better go in: in fact Monsieur must go in; these are the orders."

"Whose orders?" I asked.

"The orders of Monsieur le President," said the sentinel, giving the Indian pony a blow with the butt end of his musket, urging him through the gate. Once in I saw there was nothing for it but to remain in, so I got out of my crate, and guided by a half-breed who had come out of a small one story house I was conducted to the guard room. The room was a low roofed apartment about twelve feet square with a red hot stove in the centre, and with about twenty men seated on tables, chairs, and the floor, smoking assiduously their Indian pipes. On my entrance each man rose, looked curiously at me, smoked more assiduously than ever, and then sat down again. I had my valises in hand, and after I had got to the centre of the room, I felt somewhat in a quandary as to what I should do or where I should go, when one of the gentlemen came to my assistance and said [in] patois English "Will Monsieur give me his baggage? and I will put it to the right place."

Monsieur was only too glad to get rid of his incumbrances, so he gladly gave them up to his obliging friend, and remained staring around him.

"Will Monsieur take a seat by the stove?" said another friend.

<sup>1</sup> The *Globe* had despatched this special correspondent to Red River. He travelled in company with John Ross Robertson of the *Telegraph*. Though Cunningham does not mention it, Robertson suffered the same experience of imprisonment and deportation. See note 2 on p. 258.



Monsieur thanked him and took the proffered chair and sat down by the stove.

“Does Monsieur require any food?” said another friend. Monsieur had supped, and thanked his friend for the hospitable inquiry.

Monsieur sat a long time by the stove. Eleven, twelve, one, two o'clock came, but none of them brought M. le President. Monsieur began to doze by the stove, and the half-breeds began to doze too, and matters were beginning to get very sad and lugubrious and melancholy, when one of the half-breeds rose and said, “Monsieur had better go to bed.” Monsieur was exactly of the same opinion, so he got up from his seat by the stove, put on his overcoat and was just beginning to put on his buffalo-coat, when my friend said, “Monsieur must sleep here.”

“Where?” I inquired.

“Here,” said he, taking me into [an] adjoining room, and pointing out a buffalo-robe spread on the floor; “that is Monsieur’s bed.”

I urged that I had travelled some eighteen hundred miles, was very tired, and would like a more inviting bed than that. Could I not go to a hotel? My friend was truly sorry; but M. le President’s commands must be complied with—that was Monsieur’s bed for the night.

“Then I am a prisoner,” I said.

“That is so—by the orders of M. le President,” said my friend, turning on his heel and walking off; so I lay down on the buffalo robe tired and jaded, and I fell asleep, and did not dream at all that night; I was even too tired to dream.

About six in the morning I was awakened up by the stir in the adjoining room; so I arose, went into the room, and found it very much as I had left it in the evening previous. The stove was still red hot, about a score of half-breeds, in their shirt sleeves, sat on chairs, tables, and the floor, smoking, and as I entered each rose and gave me “Bon jour” in the most kindly and hospitable manner. In self-defence I got out my own pipe, and began to smoke as vociferously [sic] as the rest; but whether, struck with my smoked and tanned appearance, or whether instigated by an innate sense of what was due to a dirty stranger, one of the half-breeds laid down his pipe, filled a tin basin with water, and coming over to me said, “would Monsieur wash?” Monsieur was only too glad of the invitation, so he thanked his friend, and washed abundantly. He then sat himself down, and began to smoke again. Whilst sitting smoking, one of the half-breeds took a seat beside him, and entered into conversation with him.

"Monsieur is from Canada, is he not?"

"That is so."

"Is Monsieur the *Gazette* man expected?"<sup>1</sup>

"He was." My friend was delighted to meet the *Gazette* man, and shook hands with him heartily, and the other half-breeds who had gathered around shook hands too.

"Monsieur had come to get news had he not? Monsieur wished to know what we wanted? Monsieur wished to tell the people of Canada why we had taken the front [sic], and taken up arms? Was that what Monsieur had come for?"

"That was what Monsieur had come for."

"Shall I tell Monsieur what we want?" said he, turning to his confreres.

"Oui," resounded all around, so my friend resumed "we want to be treated as free men. Your Canada Government offered to pay three hundred thousand pounds to the Hudson Bay Company for the Rivière Rouge Territory. Now, what we want to know, and we will not lay down our arms till we know what they mean to buy. Was it the land? If so, who gave the Hudson Bay Company the right to sell the land? When the Canada Government bought the land did they buy what was on it? Did they buy us? Are we the slaves of the Hudson Bay Company?"

"Non!" resounded on all sides.

"No, we are not slaves. But remember, and you may tell Canada people this when you go home, that we are not the cruel murderous men we have been described. We do not want to kill any one in this quarrel. We have hurt no one yet, nor do we mean to do so. Let the Canadian Government come and treat with us as free men, and we will lay down our arms, and go to our homes." And here it may be convenient to say a word or two about these

#### FRENCH HALF-BREEDS.

It is allowed on all hands by every one who knows anything about the French half-breeds, that since this difficulty began, they have been grossly maligned. They have been pictured as an ignorant, savage race—worse in many respects than the Indians themselves—and capable of engaging in any atrocity. But nothing can be further from the truth.

<sup>1</sup> Cunningham was correspondent for the *Gazette*, of Montreal, as well as the *Globe*.

From what I saw of them, and heard of them, they are quite the opposite of all this. To me, they seemed a kindly race of people, courteous in the highest degree, and hospitable to a proverbial extent. True, they are, evidently, a rather credulous people, and from their strong religious prejudices, can be made, to a considerable extent, the tools of the priests. Nor are they by any means ignorant of political questions. It is probable that there is not one half-breed in the Red River Territory, who has not several relations in Dakota or Minnesota, from communication with whom they have gathered a pretty comprehensive idea of the political system at work in the States and Territories of the United States; and though this information by no means leads them to desire Annexation in preference to British connection, at the same time it has educated them up so far as to have some true appreciation of what rights naturally belong to them in any connection whatever. The half-breeds are not savages by any means; on the opposite, if properly treated, they might be a peaceable, industrious, harmless people.

\* \* \*

As ten o'clock approached—the hour at which I was positively assured the President would appear—I felt somewhat anxious. I had seen some pen and ink sketches of the President, in which he was pourtrayed by one as an Alexander, and by another as a Napoleon; and the prospect of meeting with either an Alexander or a Napoleon was surely enough to fluster most men. I was sitting eagerly waiting his arrival, when I heard a commotion in the next room, and on inquiring as to what was the occasion of it, I was told that M. Le President had at length arrived. On hearing this I got up and made my way into the room, where, amongst the assembled half-breeds, I saw two new arrivals. One of them was of a semi-priestly appearance, fair-haired, closely shaven, with a cringing, cunning way with him, which at once suggested to my mind my old acquaintance with Uriah Heep. He introduced himself as Mr. O'Donohoe, and began to converse in a way that more and more confirmed the Uriah idea. But there was another new comer in the room. He was a man about thirty years of age, about five feet seven inches in height—rather stoutly built. His head was covered with dark, curly hair; his face had a Jewish kind of appearance, with a very small and very fast receding forehead. This, I was sure, was M. Le President Riel, and he stood gazing at me in the most piercing manner, at least, there is no doubt, he thought so. I did my utmost to realize in him a Napoleon or an Alexander, but it was a failure—a dead signal failure,—

I could not get beyond the fact that there stood before me a Linen Draper's assistant.<sup>1</sup> There could be no mistake about that, and though he stood looking at me full ten minutes, he could not put the Linen Draper out of my mind, and if he had continued to gaze till now, the result would have been all the same. He was clad in a light tweed coat and black trousers, and he seemed exceedingly proud of them—and well he might be, for it is as certain as the fact that he wore them, that these clothes were purchased with the price of his poor widowed mother's only cow.<sup>2</sup>

"I don't know who you are," the modern Alexander at last condescended to remark, after having tried hard to impress upon me the Napoleonic theory.

In reply to this curt remark, I observed that no doubt could possibly attach to his Excellency's statement, but in order to enlighten him I begged to present him my credentials. He took them, read them, and coolly put the documents in his pocket. A brief parley then ensued. I observed that the people of Canada were anxious to know all about this Red River affair.

M. Le President observed that he thought the people of Canada knew all about it already "Look here, and here, and here," said he, pointing to great blotches of ink on the desk, "Some ink has been used, has it not, in writing facts—what more do you want?" and the Modern Alexander seemed to think he had said a very good thing, for he laughed complacently and Uriah Heep wriggled and grinned too. I endeavoured to show that what the people of Canada desired were to have the facts of the case laid before them in a plain, honest way. True, they had read a great deal about the affair, but most of what they had read had come through American channels. All they had read might be good, genuine facts—if so it would do no harm, to allow these facts to be restated.

Mr. Le President made no direct reply to this; but smote his hand violently on the desk, and said "we are in the right, we are in the right!" and walked off in company with Uriah Heep. They had a long conversation together; in the course of which, as I learned afterwards, Uriah cringingly insinuated that I was a spy. A Council was then called, and the matter was debated as to whether I should be allowed to

<sup>1</sup> Riel had worked in a dry goods store in Minneapolis in 1867-1868.

<sup>2</sup> A story often told of Riel at the time, as though it were to his discredit to have made such a sacrifice for the sake of appearances in his public position, one of dignity as he saw it.



remain or no. O'Donohoe made a speech, as I learned and argued strongly for my expulsion; all the Americans,<sup>1</sup> and most of the Half-breeds took a different stand, and maintained strongly that I should be allowed to stay. M. Le President said nothing. The Council adjourned without coming to any definite conclusion on the point, and Riel once more appeared, and walked up and down the floor like a man enduring the utmost mental agony. He ran his hand through his hair—he scratched at his nose till he peeled the skin off the point of it—now he would pause and gaze at me with the most piercing air, and then he would start off again, tearing at his hair and scratching at his nose more assiduously than ever. After promenading about half an hour—he paused, gazed at me—and coming over, said “will you want anything if you have to go back.” As he spoke in the most broken of English I did not exactly comprehend the purport of the enquiry, and asked for an explanation, when he got into a tremendous passion—“G—d d—n,” said he, “don’t I speak plain, I ask you will you want anything if you have to go back.” I deprecated the wrath of the modern Alexander, and endeavoured to show him that such an outburst of feeling was at once superfluous and entirely unwarranted. As regarded going back, if I had to go I would want nothing from him; but I hoped he would think better of it and allow me to remain. He had said he was in the right. If so my remaining could do no harm to his cause but the opposite. He gathered down his brows and looked thunder at me, no doubt imagining I was terribly afraid, and walked off; but I was not afraid at all. I had measured the man at the first glance, and saw where the pen and ink sketches had made the mistake. They credited him with military genius and ambition—and had failed to appreciate the fact that he was a vain-glorious creature, so elated by the position he had attained to, that any particle of common sense he ever had owned had been eliminated from his being, and that though he read no book but the *Life of Napoleon*, he was the mere tool of a certain party, who used him for their purposes as they listed and laughed at him.

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<sup>1</sup> A significant indication of the casual but close relations between the leaders of the Resistance and Americans like Robinson and Donaldson, at this date.

XIX: LETTER FROM A RED RIVER LOYALIST ON THE RISING OF  
FEBRUARY 15, 1870.*[Reprinted from the Globe, March 28, 1870].<sup>1</sup>*

Red River Settlement

February 22, 1870

Sir—As an old settler, and one who has never swayed in his fealty to country or Queen, will you, Mr. Editor, permit me to occupy a brief space in your valuable columns with comments on the present aspect of affairs in unhappy Red River Settlement.

Before this reaches Toronto you will doubtless have heard of the bloodless fight of the 15th inst., of Riel's victory, and of the imprisonment of forty-eight more loyal men ; but we, who constitute the majority, would like you to weigh the facts well before either branding us as cowards or believing that the Provisional Government is the choice of the people, expressed through their delegates. One fact, however, must speak for itself. Within three days after Riel's election, and James Ross, the renegade, had received the price of his allegiance in a Judgeship, eight hundred loyal men were under arms in the interests of Canada, and wild to oust the rebels from Fort Garry. Why then, you will ask, has the insurrection reached so formidable a point, if public sentiment is so averse to it? To explain I must digress. Fifteen years since, after a brief sojourn in Canada, when I returned to my birthplace, I soon discerned what time has but more fully impressed on my mind, that this Settlement is as completely priest-ridden as ever unfortunate Ireland was. Not the French alone, but all nations and creeds represented here, are to a great extent ruled by the clergy ; and though I believe that power has not been abused, except in isolated instances, few of our simple credulous people dare exercise their own discretion in temporal matters, when opposed by their spiritual leaders.

Bishop Taché sowed the seeds of rebellion, and had it not been for priestly influence, aided by Hudson Bay Co.'s Pemican, it would have died a natural death long ago. On the other side, the Protestant clergy are for " Peace, peace, when there is no peace ; " and to that cause, and that cause alone, must be attributed the failure of the English to make head against the French.

The Indian element is strong enough within us to make us fight like

<sup>1</sup> This anonymous letter is printed as being representative of the feelings among the " loyalist " natives of the Red River Colony.

demons when once aroused; and when our noble little army had spontaneously gathered together at Kildonan, on the 14th February, if the Reverend quartette<sup>1</sup> had quietly studied their sermons, or in their closets offered a prayer for our success, instead of going through our ranks discouraging our men, we would ere this have had the proud satisfaction of seeing "the flag that braved a thousand years" floating over Fort Garry, and not be disgraced by that symbol of Jesuitical Fenianism that now hangs from the flag staff. I will do them the justice to say their motives may have been good; but our sentiments are, too many peace overtures have been made already, and why is our blood more precious than that so freely asked time and again, in the contest for that liberty which every true Briton holds to be dearer than life? True, we are Indians, at best but half civilized; but we all feel an innate love for Great Britain; and three-fourths of our people, if left to themselves, would gladly welcome the representative of our Queen as our future ruler. And if such a policy is to be adopted, as not only to restore peace here, but to make it a home for Canadian emigrants, the first move should be to send an army large enough to show you are in earnest; make no compromise with such arch rebels as Riel and O'Donohoe; banish such knaves as Ross and Burns [sic: Bunn], who have sold themselves and their constituents, in the expectation that Canada will be glad to bid higher for their talents in the formation of the new Government, and burn the infamous "Bill of Rights" (which never would have passed the Convention if it had not been that a refusal on the part of the English delegates was threatened with fearful vengeance towards the prisoners confined at Fort Garry). If such a course is adopted, Canada will find the inhabitants to a man fly to her Standard. Long ago we had enough of Hudson Bay Company's justice mumbled out by Judge Black. Annexation we will not consent to, and to much longer endure the oppression and tyranny under which we now groan would be even more than the clergy could exact. Riel talks of peace, but it is futile to expect him to disband his men while Governor McTavish, in his easy chair, looks on, in the vain hope of this glorious country again becoming the resort of fur bearing animals, and helps feed the flame the Jesuits have kindled to exterminate Protestantism.

Will Canada believe, after the apparently good faith Governor

<sup>1</sup> Who the "Reverend quartette" were is not certain, but two of them were Bishop Robert Machray and the Reverend John Black; the others were probably Archdeacons McLean and Cowley.



McTavish showed when there, relative to the transfer of this country? When Riel's army was seen marching down to occupy Fort Garry their object was suspected, and the clerks begged permission to shut the gates, but it was promptly refused by Dr. Cowan under orders from their chief. Again, when the keys to various stores and the safe were demanded, the cashier said, "I have orders not to give them to you, but to allow you to search my pockets for them." Even now the Company say they don't care how long the rebellion lasts, as ultimately their present loss will be their gain. Many of the leaders believe this country will revert to them.

Galling as this oppression is we might have made no sign till spring opened were it not for the edict against Dr. Shultz [sic], who, whatever his faults, has too often stood the poor man's friend, to allow him, without some show of opposition, to become the target for French bullets. Dr. Shultz has done more for this Settlement than any one man here. That he has not always acted wisely is self evident, and his boundless ambition has proved his downfall. Had he never left the R.C. Church he might have depended on the favour of Bishop Taché.<sup>1</sup> Had he been content to be patronized by such fawning curs as the Postmaster<sup>2</sup> and Sheriff,<sup>3</sup> his ship would still have sailed smoothly on; but when his ambition led him to pander to no one, and even to expose the Company's peccadilloes his doom was sealed. He and his brave little wife are now homeless, and he a wanderer, but thank God they are not friendless, and Canada should not forget that in Dr. Shultz she always had a firm and outspoken friend, and not a cringing sycophant.

I am glad to see the *Globe* is down on Howe for the sentiments expressed when here. McDougall may not have been the right man in the right place, but assuredly that was the wrong time to spread disloyalty. We can only hope with the first buds of spring to see our deliverance near at hand, and again I say adopt the policy that so soon ended the Abyssinian war,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There is a mystery here. There is no evidence that Dr. Schultz ever was a member of the Church of Rome. But Miss Farquharson, later Mrs. Schultz, was baptized in that Church; hopes were perhaps entertained of the Doctor's conversion, and she and Dr. Schultz were married in the Cathedral of St. Boniface. It was regarded by Father Lestanc, however, as a "mixed" marriage. A.A.S.B., Lestanc to Taché, May 27, 1867; September 6, 1867. These events probably gave rise to the above statement.

<sup>2</sup> A. G. B. Bannatyne.

<sup>3</sup> Henry McKenney.

<sup>4</sup> A reference, one of many in 1870, to the Abyssinian expedition successfully carried out by the British army in 1867.



and Canada will be victorious. A handful of troops would be our ruin.

Is it known in Canada a great part of Riel's forces are American subjects, halfbreeds from Pembina and St. Joe? We have just heard one hundred and fifty mounted men are to-night to start for the Portage and subdue that loyal little Colony.

—X.Y.Z.

XX: BISHOP TACHÉ'S REPORT TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE PROVINCES ON THE FEBRUARY RISING AND THE SITUATION IN RED RIVER AT THE BEGINNING OF MARCH, 1870.

[*Reprinted from the Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territory in 1869-70 (Ottawa, 1874; French Edition, pp. 21-23).*]

[Translation]

Bishop's Palace,  
St. Boniface, 11th March, 1870

Sir,—The painful duty devolves upon me of communicating to His Excellency the condition of the country. I am most of all astonished at my own ignorance of the real state of affairs during my stay in Ottawa. The sight of the evils which weigh our people down, and the dread of still greater evils which, it may be, threaten them, cause one's heart to bleed. The colony, formerly so calm and peaceful is now given over to desolation. With the deepest regret I feel it my duty to state that, with very few exceptions, all who have come from Canada have acted as if their object was, not only to compromise the Dominion Government, but also to open out an unfathomable abyss.

I should deeply grieve you, and might even appear to you to be exaggerating, if I were to undertake to relate to you all that has been said or done here within the past six months. Making a large allowance for exaggeration, enough remains to give rise to a deep feeling of grief and to explain, in part at least, the agitation which prevails. Let them be appreciated as they may, the following are the facts:—

A Provisional Government is proclaimed, and is recognized not only by the French section of the population, but even also by the Scotch colony, and by most if not all the parishes where the English language is spoken. The Anglican Bishop and his clergy also recognized that

Government,<sup>1</sup> which was for the time a military organization resolved to cause itself to be respected. The idea of annexation, if at any time it existed, appears to have vanished;<sup>2</sup> a large majority wish for union with Canada, but the Council desire to lay down their conditions, which will, perhaps, be different from those which were specified by the convention.<sup>3</sup>

The threat of sending troops is, without doubt, the greatest obstacle to conciliation. Dissatisfaction with the Hudson's Bay Company is only equalled by that felt against the Hon. Mr. McDougall, and all those who rallied to support him by force of arms. Not only is Fort Garry occupied by the Provisional Government, but all that it contains. Furs and merchandise have been seized by that Government. The Convention had hardly closed (and it had been a very stormy one), when the whole country was on the eve of a general conflagration. Colonel Dennis' old plan was resumed—Captain Boulton, at the head of some hundred men, came down from Portage de la Prairie, and after efforts to increase his party, passed Fort Garry.

President Riel was informed of this movement. The exasperation was at its height in the garrison at Fort Garry. The men wanted to pursue these new aggressors; happily Mr. Riel and the other leaders succeeded in quieting their men, declaring that they never would be the first to shed blood. This moderation is the more worthy of praise, from the fact that probably not a single man of Captain Boulton's party would have escaped. It was at four in the morning, when the men were benumbed by the intense cold, after a march of several hours; besides they were not prepared to offer immediate resistance, for they thought to pass by unnoticed. On the other hand, Doctor Schultz was coming up the Red River from its mouth, raising the Indian population, the Swampers and English half-breeds. They were asked to come forward not to fight, but to arm themselves in order to rescue the prisoners.

The junction of these two armed bodies took place near the Scotch Church at Kildonan. The Scotch refused to take part in this movement, which fact at the outset cast a damper on it.

<sup>1</sup> This statement is true, but it is to be remembered that the "recognition" was for the sake of peace, not because a Provisional Government was thought to be desirable or necessary.

<sup>2</sup> The union of the Settlement and the prospect of a negotiated union with Canada sufficed to put an end to annexation to the United States as an alternative to union with Canada.

<sup>3</sup> The first indication of the revision of the "List of Rights" prepared by the Convention of Forty.

The plan of the leaders, whose followers mustered some hundred men,<sup>1</sup> was, it is said, to take possession of the Palace of the Bishop [of St. Boniface] and of the Cathedral, and from thence attack Fort Garry. The party also relied on the aid of some French Canadian half-breeds, who were to gather at a certain point and thence proceed to devastate the properties (and in fact, it is said, to assault the families of the soldiers of the Provisional Government), in order to compel them to disband for the protection of their homes. This latter movement did not take place.<sup>2</sup> These events occurred on the days of the 14th, 15th and 16th February, at a time when we in Ottawa believed that everything was settling down. This mad project had the effect of strengthening the Provisional Government. Very nearly all the French hitherto opposed to that Government, and who are here called rebels, rallied to the party. The Scotch and a great number of others did the same. During this time a young French half-breed was made prisoner; he soon fled, seizing a double barrelled gun. Owing to [a] sequence of circumstances, the nature of which is unknown, he shot a young Scotchman of the name of Sutherland, and killed him. Pursued by those who had previously captured him, he defended himself with an energy and vigor which exhibited a foretaste of the nature of the struggle impending with hundreds of his fellows.

An intimation carried to President Riel, elicited from him the answer: "I want peace, but I am ready for war, and since you will have it we shall begin at once." This answer, and the efforts of sensible men, created confusion in the camp, most of the men having joined without the intention of fighting; they all dispersed during the evening of the 16th. On the morning of the 17th, some of the Portage men thought they could return. They appeared in sight of Fort Garry, but at a certain distance on the prairie, some thirty horsemen were at once sent out, with orders to make them prisoners. Every one expected resistance; happily it did not occur, all of them laid down their arms and were made prisoners, to the number of forty-eight. Captain Boulton was tried by court-martial and was condemned to death. The solicitations of the Commissioners, the clergy and the Sutherland family (whose son had been killed) secured his pardon. These deplorable events threw back the arrangements in

<sup>1</sup> Should perhaps be "some hundreds of men". Some seven to eight hundred are usually said by Riel to have assembled at Kildonan.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal* for February 17, 1870; also Riel's "Historical Memoir", No. XXVII below.

progress. The delegates having been appointed were about to start, and all matters seemed to be on the eve of a settlement. Among the prisoners was one Scott, the very man who, having been brought from Canada by Mr. Snow, all but murdered him at Pointe des Chênes. Passing through Winnipeg on the night of the 13th and 14th, Scott entered the house of one Couter [sic],<sup>1</sup> a relative of Mr. Riel's, and to which the latter often resorted. He inquired whether the President was there, with the intention, as stated by some, of killing him, or of taking him as a hostage according to other accounts. Scott, when taken prisoner, exasperated the authorities,<sup>2</sup> and I am grieved to tell you that the unfortunate man was sentenced to death by a court-martial and shot on the 4th instant.

An expedition despatched by the Provisional Government started yesterday for the Portage.<sup>3</sup> I do not know its precise object, and still less the result. If this expedition succeeds without bloodshed, I have some hope that we shall have quiet, and that the delegates will start.

You will easily understand the difficulty of my position under the present circumstances. It would be but too easy to cause a division, but I consider that this would be the greatest of misfortunes. I want, on the contrary, to labour for union and the re-establishment of peace, for the Indians would take advantage of such disunions. My action can be but slow, for the Government will easily understand that the utmost prudence is required under the circumstances. I have this day had an interview with the President in order to assure him of the just and generous intentions of the Government; I begged him not to attach any importance to the clamours of certain newspapers, to rest assured that Canada does not wish and cannot wish the destruction or the enslavement of the people of the North-West. The whole French population (except for a small fraction said to have been bought over) are convinced that the greatest misfortune that could have fallen to their lot would have been to fall under the government of Mr. McDougall, and of those who had accompanied or preceded him. People here believe in the existence of an organized plan, prepared without the knowledge of the Government (but which it ought to have foreseen and known), with the object of

<sup>1</sup> Henri Coutu ; see note 5 on p. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Compare with Riel's account in the "Historical Memoir", No. xxvii below.

<sup>3</sup> Begg does not mention the departure of this party, but notes its return in the *Journal* for March 17.



driving out of the country, or at least of reducing to a species of servitude within it, the French Canadian half-breeds of the Red River and of the whole North-West.<sup>1</sup> It is this idea that exasperates the people. Time and kind treatment can alone heal the deep and fearful wound which has just been inflicted. Therefore it is that I take the liberty respectfully to state to the Government that steps must be taken to delay emigration, for, in the present exasperation of the public mind, the new comers would incur great danger.

His Excellency's proclamation has not been published in the country. The Commissioners deemed it well to abstain, through motives of prudence, and I think they were perfectly right. The matter hinges on the conviction entertained by the people that they cannot be forced to enter into Confederation any more than the other Provinces of the Dominion; that the people believe themselves in no way bound by the arrangements made with the Hon. the Hudson's Bay Company: that as a consequence the words "Rebels," "Insurgents," "Traitors," are so many insults which they repel with indignation. *This is the root of the whole matter*,—all the rest is merely accessory, and there exists no means of conciliation but to act in conformity with that principle. The people cannot tolerate the idea of having been sold, and this is the explanation of their discontent, as well towards Canada for purchasing as towards the Company for their share of the transaction.

The unfortunate incidents I have above referred to have but served to developpe this feeling, and increased the excitement induced by a transaction in which no mention has been made of the parties most deeply interested.

I take the very great liberty of saying that these reasons are more than plausible, and that I am confident His Excellency's Government will take into favorable consideration the claims of the delegates who are to start on Thursday next, and that, in the meantime, Parliament will refrain from legislating for a country where its authority is rejected by the population.

I have the honor to be,  
Your very humble servant,  
[Signed] ALEXANDER,  
BISHOP OF ST. BONIFACE, O.M.I.

<sup>1</sup> A statement of the frame of mind produced among the French clergy and the *métis* by the activities of the "Canada First" men.

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XXI: BISHOP MACHRAY TO SIR JOHN YOUNG, REVIEWING THE CAUSES  
AND COURSE OF THE RESISTANCE.

[*Copied from original in Public Archives of Canada, G. 18/24*].

Bishop's Court, Red River Settlement  
March 18th, 1870

His Excellency

The Right Hon. Sir John Young &c.

Sir,

The letter with which your Excellency honoured me was placed in my hands on January the 19th, but circumstances have not hitherto allowed of my acknowledging it.

The grave position in which we have been placed here will I am sure excuse me to your Excellency in frankly expressing my views not only on the present state of matters but on what has led to it.

One cause of our troubles has I fear been the misapprehension of your Government on the condition of this Settlement under the Hon. Hudson's Bay Company and on the real cause of the weakness of the Government established here by the Company.

Certainly since my arrival in this country which was in 1865 the Government of this country under the Company was neither oppressive nor unpopular. No appointment was made—no law was enacted but by the Voice of the Council of Assiniboia. That Council consisted of the leading members of the Community. It has been sufficiently indicated under very adverse circumstances this Winter that they were the very men that the people would have voluntarily chosen. The Judge at the head of the Magistracy was a most honourable man universally respected for his rectitude.

And yet as a Government it was perfectly helpless in any difficulty. And the sole reason was that it had no military or properly organised police force.

One reason, then, for which many desired union with Canada was that they expected to have with Self-Government a strong Government, that could ensure its laws being respected.

It was, therefore, with much concern that it was understood that Canada did not intend to send any troops here.

A detachment of 100 men would have been enough.

It was felt that the New Government would be weaker than that of

the Company for it would be without its prestige and the great experience of its officers as well as the sympathy rising out of many obligations and associations.

Your Government made then the two grave blunders of not securing the presence of troops and of proposing to govern the country for a time—even though probably for a very short time—by a nominated Council of a less popular character than even the old Council of Assiniboia.

Now I cannot but say that I think your Excellency's Government deserves not a little blame for allowing itself to be led into these blunders. It took a course which is always very dangerous. Persons holding official and responsible positions in this country were not consulted or even listened to. The Statements of a partisan & I regret to say utterly untrustworthy Newspaper seem to have been credited and the opinions of a few private individuals accepted whose reliableness could never have been investigated. Had even the ordinary precaution been adopted at an early period of sending a Statesman of judgement & experience like Mr. Howe to test the information, that had been received, I have no doubt all would have been well.

Now I do not mean that this unfortunate line of Action led directly to the special blunders I have named but to such a misunderstanding of the posture of Affairs here as naturally gave rise to them.

The Government seemed to believe that the people of this country were oppressed by the Company—Serfs as Mr. McDougall has called them—and that they were looking so impatiently for the Advent of Canada that there had to be little care as to the arrangements for that Advent. This view is so erroneous as to be only ludicrous to those who know the real circumstances. Drs. Schultz and Bown and a few persons about them wrote & professed to think in that manner. The Action of the Government of Canada by recommending Canadian Officials & Canadians to the attention and influence of that little knot of individuals gave occasion further to a succession of petty mistakes that have already been sufficiently before the public and that really made Canada unpopular with many.

As regards myself when I was in Ottawa in the Autumn of 1868 I placed myself at the disposal of the Government and I would have gladly furnished it then or afterwards with the fullest information I could or my opinion on any subject connected with the country. And I may say once for all that most undeserved suspicion has been thrown out upon gentlemen whose reports could have been thoroughly relied upon. The

Officers of the Company in this Settlement Governor Mactavish, Judge Black, & Dr. Cowan are men of the highest integrity & honour.

Your Excellency is probably aware with what pertinacity the Authorities here through Governor Dallas and then Governor Mactavish pressed at Home the necessity of troops.

When I heard of the negotiations opened up by Canada I wrote to the Duke of Buckingham in accordance with an Invitation I had from his Predecessor, Mr. Cardwell.

I pressed upon his Grace first the urgency of sending a small detachment of troops as there was imminent risk any day of some outbreak leading to an entire prostration of law & order. Secondly the necessity in arranging for any transfer of the country of proper provision for the tenures and titles of present occupiers of land by Grant, purchase, or squatting. Thirdly the propriety of arranging for the independence of the See of Rupert's Land and the Succession to it.

But the Home Government acted so as to be by no means free of blame. England may of course give up her Colonial Empire; but as long as she retains the name of Sovereignty she certainly cannot cast away the obligations. There is a duty owing by the Governor to the Governed. It was no proper answer to the requests of the Hudson's Bay Co. to refuse troops unless their expense were borne. It was the duty of the British Government in the peculiar circumstances of this country to see whether the representations of the necessity of troops were correct and if they were to send troops [torn] here whatever steps might have thereby been considered necessary with the Hudson's Bay Company.

I think too that before Lord Granville gave his Sanction to a scheme of transfer he should have informed himself whether there were any questions in connection with the position of settlers here requiring to be set at rest by Imperial authority. In this connection Your Excellency will perhaps allow me to say that the assurance of respecting "just rights" hardly meets the case of a country in such a primitive and peculiar condition as this is. Just rights are properly those for which there is some legal basis—that is—that can be substantiated and maintained by legal process. Something more definite is needed here. The very titles to land given by the Company were burdened with impossible conditions. Many occupiers have no Titles.

The Governor and Directors of the Hudson's Bay Company completed this Series of Government blunders by the remissness of their conduct after the arrangements for the Transfer were completed. They



almost seem to have thought only of their shareholders and to have forgotten that what they professed to surrender involved weighty responsibilities. They treated with anything but proper courtesy Governor Mactavish and the Council of Assiniboia. As to ourselves that mattered little; but it brought with it consequences. Between the reticence of the Company and the Government of Canada the authorities here had no information of the course of events. Every step came as a surprise. No intimation was given of the character or policy of the new Government. Mr. McDougall wrote bitterly complaining that no proclamation had been issued to set at rest the doubts of the malcontents—It was impossible for we had no information beyond the fact of an approaching Transfer.

I have now placed before your Excellency what I regard as mistakes in the action of the Three Parties that were engaged in the Transfer of this country—mistakes that gave ground and opportunity for the troubles we have to deplore.

[Torn] when the originating causes of those troubles are considered there is greater difficulty. They have arisen entirely from the French and Roman Catholic Section of the Community. I am not aware of a single English-speaking & Protestant member of the Community that has taken arms to resist the Entrance to Canada. The more intelligent members of the English Section regretted much the course that was attributed to the Government of Canada of managing the country by a nominated Council; but they never had any doubt that the matter would soon right itself and though it made them rather cool with respect to Canada for a time, they never had the slightest idea of resorting to force. Mr. Howe seems to have got an exaggerated idea of their feelings and action. They never had any meetings to my knowledge on the subject. They certainly never did anything to give a beginning to the French action. That imputation is entirely undeserved.

The English Section of the Community is not less anxious about their rights and about the prosperity of the country than the French; but they have never entertained a doubt that in due time everything that would be advantageous for the country would be granted by Canada. As events have gone on, the feeling on behalf of Canada has grown stronger in the English Section, so that I may say there is now a universal anxiety among the English for the settlement of affairs so as to allow the peaceable entrance of Canada.

Next I would say that I am perfectly sure that no dissatisfaction of

the Employees of the Hudson's Bay Company had anything to do with these troubles. It does not require much knowledge of the State of things here to see that a strong government in this settlement had become an absolute necessity for the continuance of the Fur trade. It has to be admitted that there has been frequently among the English here this Winter a strong conviction that the managing officers of the Company here sympathized more or less with the movement and were in league with its leaders. I have regretted deeply this unreasonable suspicion and thought it little creditable to the good sense of those that had it. Your Excellency may depend upon it that Governor Mactavish did everything he could to prevent and stop the insurrection. He, Judge Black, & Dr. Cowan have been as faithful to Canada, as if they had been your Excellency's officers.

I am inclined to think the origin of our troubles to be a very simple one—that it is a feeling in the French Section that the French Half-breeds will not stand the new state of things to be developed by a considerable Emigration—at any rate unless they can raise some breakwater. The Body of the French Half-breeds is sadly illiterate and ignorant. Probably when the better informed began to disseminate these views absurd fears would get hold of the mass. I have no doubt the Roman Catholic Clergy largely share the apprehensions of their people. I would not, however, venture on supposing that they began the movement. After the movement had begun, it was certainly very effectually helped on by some of them and I think I may say that, when the movement was fully developed, they exerted themselves to prevent divisions in their flock which practically had the effect of maintaining the authority of Mr. Riel & of quenching several movements that threatened to disorganize and break up the party. It is my opinion that the difficulty that has stood in the way of any Settlement is that the rights that have hitherto been put forward by the French and debated are not what they really care for, but that they wish for a Section of the country to be restricted to the French Population.

The insurrection came upon us very unexpectedly. I see that Mr. Howe speaks of learning the probability of such an event before he came to the Settlement. I suppose that happened from the circumstances of many French Half-breeds being scattered through Minnesota. But I myself heard only the vaguest rumour of such a thing before it suddenly broke on us.

Mr. Howe had gone through the Settlement the previous week and

left a very favourable impression. I only saw him for a few Minutes & nothing of any consequence passed between us ; but I learned from others that he seemed to take a very accurate [torn] of the state of matters. I think it is greatly to be regretted that his visit was not 6 Months sooner.

At last the insurrection began—An active Man of Spirit at the head of Affairs might perhaps have at once trampled it out and might have perhaps once and again changed the course of events ; but Mr. Mactavish has been incapable of action from serious illness from the first and Dr. Cowan, most excellent man that he is, is constitutionally unequal to the responsibilities and ventures necessary for grappling vigorously with such a disorder. A Council was held in a few days which I attended with the intention of supporting the putting down of the Movement by force. But I found myself alone in my views and felt that it would not be a proper position for me to register an unmeaning motion to that effect. The Council were so persuaded of the gravity of the circumstances that they had recourse to negotiation. In view of what has since occurred I could wish that I had more strenuously pushed the calling out of special constables ; but I am free to admit that I am not clear that it would have been of any use. I think there is reason to doubt how far in the then temper of the English Section there would have been a ready & full muster. At the best two or three days would have been consumed and I greatly fear that by the time the force was ready there would have been such a combined front shown by the French Population as would in the view of thoughtful persons have rendered action impracticable. The Council continued to give the subject its most earnest consideration. It was with much regret that we gave Mr. McDougall the advice we did but we felt it to be the best.<sup>1</sup> I believe I am myself very much responsible for the motions that we adopted and I can assure your Excellency that it has been all along my most hearty desire to see Canada received and this country a part of the Confederation. Every effort was made by Governor Mactavish in the way of conciliation. And I think there is great reason to believe that he would have succeeded ; but unfortunately Mr. McDougall at Pembina instead of listening to the advice of the Governor & Council [torn] Assiniboia held private correspondence with Dr. Schultz and tho' after a hint it would seem from Mr. Howe that should have put him on his guard. The consequence was he allowed his mind to be prejudiced against the Authorities here. He supposed that they

<sup>1</sup> In effect, not to attempt to enter the country.



were false to Canada. He became party to a scheming that was sufficiently known to keep up a constant irritation among the French. A letter read by Mr. McDougall in the House of Commons on Feb. 21 shows how entirely he allowed himself to be misinformed.<sup>1</sup>

I need not refer to the unfortunate Mission of Col. Dennis or to other matters. Several times have there been signs giving hope of light; but always some unwise action of friends of Canada has led on to a greater darkness. It only remains then for me to say a few words on the attitude of the English. It is nothing but necessity that has led them in any way to meet and act in Council with the French. The necessity has been partly to aid the liberation of the prisoners & partly to avoid the often threatened carrying of war through the little Settlement & to see whether anything could be done to assist an amicable arrangement. They have not been anxious for any demands on Canada and they have done what they could though with little success in cruelly trying circumstances to moderate the demands of the French. It is very important, however, that their position should be understood. It is very true that the propositions affirmed by the late Convention are rather French demands than properly demands of the whole Population; yet the Meaning of that is simply this, that the English have felt that their rights are not in doubt at all—I believe if it were really a question as to the obtaining of just rights it would be found that, as far as those Propositions went, the English would fully feel that most of them were necessary for the country in the very interest of Canada. I am speaking of Propositions agreed to—Fortnight ago—I do not know the form they are now to take.<sup>2</sup> The English Section, which is the larger one & the more important, [torn] most friendly to Canada and is intensely loyal to the Queen. But it has not stood up in arms & fought the question out for Canada.

There never was a time when the English Section gave evidence of offensive action that the French Section did not present a more or less united front. Now not to speak of the French being under better control & discipline and having every advantage in position & arms it

<sup>1</sup> Canada: Parliamentary Debates (House of Commons), February 21, 1871: the letter was one from McDougall himself, dated November 13, 1869, to a member of the Canadian cabinet. Its gist was that Howe had warned him only against the Canadian party, but not against a rising supported by "Yankee sympathizers and foreign Jesuits".

<sup>2</sup> An allusion, presumably, to the drafting of the third and fourth "List of Rights" by the Executive Council of the Provisional Government.



may be said that even victory would have been hardly less fatal to the English Section & the interests of Canada than defeat. From the time that the French mustered some 600 Strong to resist Col. Dennis and probably from the beginning, the only wise policy for the friends of Canada here was to try to avoid a collision & if a Settlement could not be arrived at through conciliatory measures, to endeavour to give as little occasion of interference with the loyal population as possible till assistance could come from Canada. The irritating & ineffectual attempts, then, made or threatened, had not the approval or in fact the knowledge of the most thoughtful friends of Canada.

May I be permitted to say that the Dominion Government has had in Mr. Smith a most conscientious and devoted Representative. His position has been one of great difficulty and delicacy as well as of unpleasantness.

I am in great hopes that Monseigneur Taché may be able to calm, moderate, & satisfy his flock & make everything plain for Canada. He has ever been held in the greatest respect by the English as well as the French Section—by the latter, however, he is devotedly regarded.

I have said that there was no meeting of the English on account of any dissatisfaction with Canada's arrangements.<sup>1</sup> There was a Meeting for passing an address to Governor McDougall on his arrival.<sup>2</sup> The Council of Assiniboia and the Executive Committee of the Church of England here, which contains in its Communion most of the English Half-breeds, also drew addresses to be presented to Mr. McDougall.

I ought perhaps to say that though the Hudson's Bay Company here was not unpopular before these troubles began yet that at the present moment the Hon.Co. is anything but popular.

This has arisen from a groundless suspicion on the part of the English—and I fear on the part of the French from that failing of human Nature—their sense of having so hardly treated the Company, but so it is.

I have ventured to write so freely to your Excellency with respect to the Government &c from my feeling that it was a time for the real feelings of one like myself here being known to your Excellency & Government for your information—whether my views be correct or not.

Should things yet take a wrong turn the position of the English

<sup>1</sup> The meeting at the home of Thomas Sinclair, however, seems to have been for that purpose ; see p. 45 of Introduction.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably that held at St. Andrew's and reported in the *Nor' Wester*, October 26, 1869. There was some outspoken opposition to an address being prepared.

Section will be awkward & dangerous in the extreme & we can see nothing but utter ruin staring the country in the face. But I hope for better things. I think there is at last sign of light breaking on us.<sup>1</sup>

Your Excellency may at any rate depend upon my doing my best in the way I judge correct for securing the entrance of this country into the Confederation of the Dominion of Canada—That has always been my most anxious desire.

I am,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most humble & obedient Servant

R. RUPERT'S LAND

XXII: REPORT OF MASS MEETING IN TORONTO, HELD ON THE  
ARRIVAL OF LOYALIST REFUGEES, APRIL 6, 1870.

[*Reprinted from the Globe, April 7, 1870*].<sup>2</sup>

INDIGNATION MEETING.

IMMENSE CROWD.

Meeting Adjourned to City Hall Square.

Resolution Passed Against Receiving Riel's Delegates.

Last night one of the most enthusiastic meetings that has ever been held in this city for many a day, was held first in the St. Lawrence Hall, and then in the square in front of the City Hall. The meeting was called by the Mayor<sup>3</sup> on requisition, and at one time in the evening no fewer than four or five thousand people could have been present. By seven o'clock the St. Lawrence Hall was completely packed, and as the time advanced people continued to congregate to such an extent, that by eight o'clock as many as would have filled the Hall three times over had assembled on King street. When the hour of meeting had arrived, the

<sup>1</sup> Machray makes no reference to the shooting of Scott.

<sup>2</sup> The effect of the execution of Scott on public sentiment in Ontario, skilfully aroused as it was by the "Canada First" men, and the return of the Canadians driven out of Red River, is apparent in this report of a mass meeting in Toronto to welcome some of the exiles. It had been inspired by the "Canada First" men, some of whom were present and spoke.

<sup>3</sup> S. B. Harman, Mayor of Toronto, 1869-1870.

Hall was packed from roof to ceiling—literally—for some adventurous perched themselves on the cornices, and seated themselves in positions which to the audience beneath seemed anything but safe. About eight o'clock the Mayor arrived and, mounting on the table on the platform, said that he thought that in justice to the people outside it would be advisable to adjourn to some more commodious place of meeting. Before doing so, however, he introduced Dr. Schultz to the meeting, who mounted on the table beside the Mayor, and was received with tumultuous applause. After this enthusiasm had been sufficiently manifested, the question was put, "where was the best place the meeting could be held?" when loud cries of the "Market Square" was heard, but the Mayor subsequently intimated that the meeting should adjourn to the space in front of the City Hall. Thereupon a rush took place, and in a few minutes afterwards the hall was empty. The crowd then set towards the square in front of the City Hall, and by half past eight no fewer than five thousand people were assembled, and the utmost enthusiasm was manifested.

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His Worship the Mayor in opening the meeting read the requisition which had been presented to him, asking him to call the meeting. He said when he first saw that requisition he felt some hesitation in complying with it. And whence arose the hesitation? Was it on account of want of sympathy ("no, no,") on his part with those gallant men who stood up for British supremacy in Red River? No, it was not so. Their names—the names of those brave men would live in history, and be handed down side by side with those who led the gallant charge at Balaklava (cheers) to uphold the dignity of Great Britain against the greatest odds that could be brought against them. The reason of his hesitation was that he feared for the moment lest anything should take place at this meeting which would look like want of confidence in our rulers whether Imperial or Colonial to deal with this question. (Hear, hear.) He felt perfect confidence that the same power which had been able to make itself felt at Lucknow and Delhi would be sufficient to put down that miserable creature (cheers) who attempts to usurp authority at Fort Garry, and establish again the supremacy and glory of the British flag. Under the circumstances he had a conference with the requisitionists, and when he was informed that this meeting was to be purely non-political and simply to express admiration for those who had come forward in the cause of law and order, he hesitated no longer. When he ascertained that the object

of this meeting was to strengthen the hands of the Government in dealing with this matter, he felt all scruples on his part removed, and he came forward this evening as heartily and earnestly as any of his fellow-citizens to welcome loyal subjects from the North-West and to offer them such a reception as would be worthy of the city of Toronto. (Hear, hear.) But the requisition alluded to another matter—the murder of Scott. (Cheers.) Yes, he would call it by the right name, a foul and unnatural murder. But in expressing their opinions on the subject, he hoped the people would do so temperately, and with a firm reliance in our rulers and the justice of our cause—with a strong trust in Him who said, “Vengeance is mine, and I will repay.” But before concluding he would make one further allusion to that gallant band of men who went forward from Portage la Prairie to rescue the Canadians imprisoned in Fort Garry. There were some of those men now present, who would address the meeting from the platform; but there was one gentleman who was not present whose name he would mention—he alluded to the gallant Major Boulton, a Canadian who had shewn the greatest bravery on the occasion, and came forward to do or die in rescuing his countrymen. He wished to read a letter from Major Boulton to his parents before starting on the expedition, but as the light was bad he would not read it now. (Cries of “Read it,” “Print it.”) He would read a short extract from it:—“I am going on an expedition to-morrow that may result very disastrously to some of us. The poor prisoners are now two months in gaol, and we have resolved to obtain their release or die in the attempt.” (Cheers.) “It is a duty we owe to them and to our country, and I feel confident that we have right on our side.” The further part of the letter alluded to the Major’s parting, and to the hazardous nature of the enterprise. When all this was explained to him (the Mayor) he had great pleasure in calling this meeting, and he had no doubt it would be conducted in an orderly and proper manner, which would show to our statesmen and rulers that they were prepared to uphold British supremacy on this continent. (Cheers.)

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Dr. Schultz was next introduced, amid enthusiastic and prolonged cheering. He said he could corroborate the statement made by Dr. Lynch, that it was that gentleman who had the sore throat; he (Dr. Schultz) never was in better voice in his life. (Laughter.) Some months ago, however, he had serious apprehensions of catching a very severe sore throat—(renewed laughter)—for Riel had a rope prepared



for it, and £40 was offered for his (Dr. Schultz's) capture. (Never.) But though there was danger to his throat then, there was none now. This assembly wished to hear something of the situation of affairs at Red River. Well, he would give it in a few words, referring more particularly to the condition of affairs at Fort Garry. The situation at that Fort was simply this, that the Fenian flag floated from its flagstaff. (Hisses and cries of "We'll tear it down.") The rebels hold high revelry within its walls, and (he said it with reverence) Canadians lay in dungeons within it. It was to tell the people of Canada this that he had come over a long and tedious journey, and to ask them what they intended to do in the matter. ("We'll hang Riel.") But in manifesting their very just wrath, and in speaking of the people of Red River, he cautioned his hearers not to fall into what seemed to be a general error, of charging all the half breeds of Red River with complicity in this most atrocious crime. He would like to point out that it was not the half breeds, but a mere section of that people who by their utter want of energy in every rank of life had failed to attract notice to themselves. No one knew Riel or O'Donohoe eight months ago—they belonged to this class. It must be distinctly understood that at least four hundred French half breeds to-day were loyal, (cheers) and would join any force that would go to Red River to put down the rebellion.

A VOICE—"What did Mr. Mair say?"

Mr. MAIR said his remarks must have been misunderstood. There was a very considerable section of the French people who were industrious and in comfortable circumstances, and that section had always been loyal. When he mentioned the French, he referred entirely to those of Riel's party.

DR. SCHULTZ continued—According to the latest news from Red River four of these loyal French half-breeds had been imprisoned by Riel, and God only knew what would be their fate. He would therefore repeat again that a large section of the French half breeds were loyal to the Crown and he wished it to be clearly understood that the rebellious French half-breeds were only some 250 or 300 men who were in Fort Garry at the present day. Then there was another matter that the people of Canada did not seem to understand thoroughly, that was with regard to the Indian tribes of the country. Since he had arrived in Canada, he noticed an extract from the rebel paper published at Fort Garry, stating that Riel intended to oppose the entrance of the Canadian troops—not with one tribe of Indians only, but with twenty-five tribes. Amongst

the blackest of Riel's lies this was the darkest. He could not get one Indian to join him (cheers), for the simple reason that his interests and feelings and theirs were antagonistic. The half-breeds claimed a title to the lands. This was quite clearly understood by the Indians, and they saw quite clearly that two parties could not be paid for the same property. Moreover, the rebels said specially through their paper that they would oppose the greatest obstruction to the Canadian troops between Fort William and Fort Garry. His reason for coming that way, instead of accompanying Dr. Lynch by way of Chicago, was more especially to find out this matter clearly. Although he had known those Indians well, and had sent trappers among them, he wanted to go to their camps himself and find out their sentiments towards Canada. This he accomplished fully. (Applause.) He went amongst them, ate with them, slept in their wigwams, and conversed with them, and therefore knew their thoughts and feelings, and he assured his hearers that between Fort William and Red River Riel could not get a single Indian; but the Government of Canada could at any time, on asking them, obtain their aid in every possible way. In a hundred ways in which Indians must be employed we can command their services. (Cheers.) He might tell many important things with respect to the origin of the insurrection, but it would involve very grave charges against certain parties; (Cries of "Let us hear them,") but as he purposed to bring them up before the public, and maybe in the presence of those he now addressed, he would make no accusation to-night against anybody. (Cries of "What about Howe?") He would enter into no accusation now, for nothing was to be gained by looking at the past, it was better to look forward to the future. (Hear, hear.) If he knew the Canadians right the snow would not cover the ground next fall before they had possession of Red River. (Cheers.) What Canadians could not do, he held could not be done at all. (Applause.) Canadians were met everywhere in the Western country, and they always stood pre-eminent. Even on the Pacific slope, among the rough miners, where rowdyism prevailed, they held pre-eminence. Of course this was not to their credit, but it served simply to show that they will be foremost in everything. (Laughter.) Let no one then hang his head because he was a Canadian, he (Dr. Schultz) did not.

A VOICE—"Nor anyone else either."

Dr. SCHULTZ—Then again we are told it was impossible to go from Superior to Red River Settlement by boat, and over the really good road that the Government was making. Such a statement was a lie.

(Cheers.) What men had done men could do, and especially Canadian men. Twenty years ago when the route was entirely unimproved, troops were taken over it by bark canoes,<sup>1</sup> and now that it was being improved and with the preparations that were being made by Government, troops could be easily transported to the territory, and once there, would put a speedy end to Mr. Riel's reign.

A VOICE—"What about coming back?"

Dr. SCHULTZ said there was no need to think of that, for when people went to Red River and saw the country they had no desire to return to Canada.

A VOICE—"What about the climate?"

Dr. SCHULTZ said he was a native of the western part of Canada,<sup>2</sup> and his hearers knew what sort of a climate they had there. The winter was a succession of snows and thaws, and frosts, and miserable changes, but in Red River there was nothing of that sort. The mercury sometimes falls to 30 or 35 degrees below zero, but it was not thought anything of, for it was a steady, dry cold, and was preferable to the climate at Toronto. With regard to agriculture he need only remark that the average of the wheat crop over the country was thirty five bushels to the acre. He begged of his hearers to accept his hearty thanks. ("Go on.") He would speak to them again on coming back from Ottawa. It was from Ontario this movement to add Red River to the Dominion commenced; it was in Ontario this expression of indignation was expressed; and it was to Ontario the Territory properly belonged. He only hoped the day was not far distant when Ontario would have peaceable possession of it, and that he would meet many of his hearers in Red River. (Repeated cheers.)

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XXIII: THE THIRD LIST OF RIGHTS, AS DRAWN BY THE EXECUTIVE OF THE PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT [FEBRUARY 11—MARCH 9?].<sup>3</sup>

[From a printed copy in *P.A.M., Ross Papers, U.*]

I. THAT the Territories heretofore known as Rupert's Land and North-West, shall not enter into the Confederation of the Dominion of

<sup>1</sup> An error; the 6th Foot and the pensioners, the troops taken to Red River at the date indicated, were moved by the route from York Factory on Hudson Bay.

<sup>2</sup> Schultz was a native of Amherstburg, Ontario.

<sup>3</sup> The copy in U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, has this notation in script: "Bill of Rights as delivered to the Delegates for



Canada, except as a Province ; to be styled and known as the Province of Assiniboia, and with all the rights and privileges common to the different Provinces of the Dominion.<sup>1</sup>

II. THAT we have two Representatives in the Senate, and four in the House of Commons of Canada, until such time as an increase of population entitle the Province to a greater Representation.

III. THAT the Province of Assiniboia shall not be held liable at any time for any portion of the Public debt of the Dominion contracted before the date the said Province shall have entered the Confederation, unless the

Presentation to the Dominion Government." The list is printed in Begg, *The Creation of Manitoba*, p. 325.

The "Third List", as do the others, illustrates the ultimate ground for the Resistance, namely, that through the failure of the Imperial Government to create a Crown colony in the North-West, and of the Hudson's Bay Company to refer the question of the transfer in any way to the people of Assiniboia, the people of the North-West lacked any constituted agency through which they might discuss terms of union with Canada. While it may be argued that their need, or their claim, to do so was slight, the national consciousness of the *métis*, once inflamed by Riel and his associates, made them insist on negotiation.

Of the articles, the "Instruction to the Delegates" made Numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 15, 17, 19 and 20 discretionary, the remainder mandatory : P.A.M., Red River Disturbances, Thomas Bunn to delegates, March 22, 1870 ; also Begg, *The Creation of Manitoba*, pp. 323-324.

<sup>1</sup> The "Fourth List" was printed in the *Manitoba Free Press*, December 27, 1889, by Archbishop Taché ; it has been reprinted in George Bryce, "Two Provisional Governments in Manitoba," *Transactions of the Historical and Scientific Society of Manitoba*, No. 38 ; also in J. S. Ewart, *The Manitoba School Question* (Toronto, 1894).

Article 1 of the "Fourth List" reads as follows :

"1. That the territory of the Northwest enter into the Confederation of the Dominion of Canada as a province, with all the privileges common with [sic] all the different provinces in the Dominion.

That this province be governed :

- 1) By a Lieutenant-Governor appointed by the Governor-General of Canada.
- 2) By a Senate.
- 3) By a Legislature chosen by the people with a responsible ministry."

The pre-occupation of Riel with provincial status, first displayed in the Convention of Forty and in this Article carried to fruition, arose, it may be conjectured, not from any tactical purpose at the time, but from his study of the terms of the B.N.A. Act of 1867 (see *New Nation*, February 1, 1870) made possible by the loan by James Ross of "son livre de la Confédération" : P.A.M., Ross Papers, U-14, Riel to James Ross, February 21, 1870. What book it was is unknown, but presumably it contained the terms of the B.N.A. Act, from which Riel read in the Convention during the discussion on February 4 (*New Nation*, February 11, 1870).



said Province shall have first received from the Dominion the full amount for which the said Province is to be held liable.

IV. THAT the sum of Eighty Thousand (80,000) dollars be paid annually by the Dominion Government to the local Legislature of this Province.

V. THAT all properties, rights and privileges engaged [sic : enjoyed] by the people of this Province, up to the date of our entering into the Confederation, be respected ; and that the arrangement and confirmation of all customs, usages and privileges be left exclusively to the local Legislature.

VI. THAT during the term of five years, the Province of Assiniboia shall not be subjected to any direct taxation, except such as may be imposed by local Legislature, for municipal or local purposes.

VII.<sup>1</sup> THAT a sum of money equal to eighty cents per head of the population of this Province, be paid annually by the Canadian Government to the local Legislature of the said Province ; until such time as the said population shall have reached six hundred thousand.

VIII. THAT the local Legislature shall have the right to determine the qualification of members to represent this Province in the Parliament of Canada and in the local Legislature.

IX. THAT in this Province, with the exception of uncivilised and unsettled Indians, every male native citizen who has attained the age of twenty-one years, and every foreigner being a British subject, who has attained the same age and has resided three years in the Province, and is a householder ; and every foreigner, other than a British subject, who has resided here during the same period, being a householder and having taken the oath of allegiance, shall be entitled to vote at the election of members for the local Legislature and for the Canadian Parliament.

<sup>1</sup> The " Fourth List " has as Article VII the following :

" 1. That the schools be separate, and that the public money for schools be distributed among the different religious denominations in proportion to their respective populations according to the system in the Province of Quebec." The remaining articles of the " Fourth List " follow in sequence, and while extensively re-worded, are in substance the same as those of the third.

The reason for the introduction of this clause at this late stage can only be conjectured. It is usually assumed that it was at Taché's wish, and there is no known reason to doubt this. But the suggestion may have been made to Taché by Joseph Le May in discussion at Pembina. The matter of separate schools is discussed in a letter from Le May to Taché : A.A.S.B., Le May to Taché, March 12, 1870, from Pembina.

It being understood that this article be subject to amendment exclusively by the local Legislature.

X. THAT the bargain of the Hudson's Bay Company with respect to the transfer of the Government of this country to the Dominion of Canada, be annulled; so far as it interferes with the rights of the people of Assiniboia, and so far as it would affect our future relations with Canada.

XI. THAT the local Legislature of the Province of Assiniboia shall have full control over all the public lands of the Province and the right to annul all acts or arrangements, made, or entered into, with reference to the public lands of Rupert's Land, and the [N]ord West now called the Province of Assiniboia.

XII. THAT the Government of Canada appoint a Commission of Engineers to explore the various districts of the Province of Assiniboia, and to lay before the local Legislature a report of the mineral wealth of the Province, within five years from the date of our entering into Confederation.

XIII. THAT treaties be concluded between Canada and the different Indian tribes of the Province of Assiniboia, by and with the advice and cooperation of the local Segislature [sic] of this Province.

XIV. THAT an uninterrupted steam communication from Lake Superior to Fort Garry be guaranteed, to be completed within the space of five years.

XV. THAT all public buildings, bridges, roads and other public works, be at the cost of the Dominion Treasury.

XVI. THAT the English and French languages be common in the Legislature and in the Courts, and that all public documents, as well as all acts of the Legislature be published in both languages.

XVII. THAT whereas the French and English speaking people of Assiniboia are so equally divided as to number, yet so united in their interests and so connected by commerce, family connections and other political and social relations, that it has, happily, been found impossible to bring them into hostile collision,—although repeated attempts have been made by designing strangers, for reasons known to themselves, to bring about so ruinous and disastrous an event;—and whereas after all the troubles and apparent dissentions [sic] of the past,—the result of misunderstanding among themselves; they have—as soon as the evil agencies referred to above were removed,—become as united and friendly as ever;—therefore, as a means to strengthen this union and friendly feeling among all classes, we deem it expedient and advisable,—That the

Lieutenant-Governor, who may be appointed for the Province of Assiniboia, should be familiar with both the French and English languages.<sup>1</sup>

XVIII. THAT the Judge of the Supreme Court speak the English and French languages.

XIX. THAT all debts contracted by the Provisional Government of the Territory of the North-West, now called Assiniboia, in consequence of the illegal and inconsiderate measures adopted by Canadian officials to bring about a civil war in our midst, be paid out of the Dominion Treasury; and that none of the members of the Provisional Government, or any of those acting under them, be in any way held liable or responsible with regard to the movement, or any of the actions which led to the present negotiations.<sup>2</sup>

XX. THAT in view of the present exceptional position of Assiniboia, duties upon goods imported into the Province, shall, except in the case of spirituous liquors, continue as at present for at least three years from the date of our entering the Confederation and for such further time as may elapse until there be uninterrupted railroad communication between Winnipeg and St. Paul and also steam communication between Winnipeg and Lake Superior.

XXIV: LETTER FROM N. P. LANGFORD<sup>3</sup> TO J. W. TAYLOR, JULY 10, 1870, WRITTEN ON VISIT OF EXPLORATION PARTY OF NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILWAY TO FORT GARRY AT END OF APRIL, 1870.

[Copied from original in *J. W. Taylor Papers, Minnesota Historical Society Collections*].

Dear Sir,

Knowing that you feel a great interest in the condition of affairs at Winnipeg, I have thought it not improper to communicate to you, very

<sup>1</sup> A new article, not in the "Second List".

<sup>2</sup> A new article, the "amnesty article". It was not, oddly, made mandatory by the "Instructions to the Delegates".

<sup>3</sup> This letter is printed because it is the only record known to the editor of the approaches Ex-Governor William R. Marshall of Minnesota, acting for Jay Cooke and the Northern Pacific Railway, made to Riel. A political report, a railway report, and a journal of the expedition were forwarded by Marshall to Cooke (P.H.S., Cooke Papers, Cooke to H. D. Cooke, May 26, 1870; Marshall to Cooke, May 22, 1870), but it has proved impossible to find these probably highly significant documents. N. P. Langford had come to St. Paul in 1854; was Collector of Internal Revenue for Minnesota, 1864-1868; was a member of the Marshall party.



briefly, the result of my own observations during my recent visit at Fort Garry and Pembina.<sup>1</sup>

At Pembina, there was but one feeling,—that of full sympathy with, and entire justification of every act of Riel and those under his authority. Even the execution of Scott was fully and completely justified. It was the impression of our people there, that the propositions submitted by Riel would be modified by Canada, and that these modifications would, through the influence of Bishop Taché, be accepted by Riel, who might think it best to compromise, rather than lose the Bishop's influence. At Ft. Garry, we met Major Robinson (formerly editor of the *New Nation*) Mr. Burdick, Capt. Donaldson and others (all Americans) who all expressed very different views from those of our people at Pembina. They said that Riel had led them to believe that he favored annexation, and in this respect had deceived them. Robinson said that the *New Nation* was not allowed to publish anything favoring annexation,—that Riel had suppressed many articles he had prepared on that question. They said there were not fifty men (except a few Americans), in the settlement, that favored the annexation movement.

I called upon Riel, in company with Gov. Marshall. Riel is about 28 years of age, has a fine physique, of active temperament, a great worker, and I think is able to endure a great deal. He is a large man, with a high forehead (not broad) of very winning persuasive manners; and in his whole bearing, energy and ready decision are prominent characteristics;—and in this fact, lies his great powers—for I should not give him credit for great profundity, yet he is sagacious, and I think thoroughly patriotic and no less thoroughly incorruptible. In his intercourse with us, he was very diplomatic and non-committal. Yet there was nothing offensive in this, but rather it appeared to me to be a merit in him. He referred to the difficulties by which he was surrounded and twice or thrice said that his people were not then prepared to accept what he ultimately designed for them, that it was too long a step to take at once.

Gov. Marshall saw O'Donoghue when I was not present, when he (Mr. O'D) frankly acknowledged that he desired independence and annexation, but that if Canada accepted their proposed terms, they (Riel and himself) must keep good faith with Canada,—otherwise they must look to the Americans for aid. While O'Donoghue and Marshall were

<sup>1</sup> The Marshall party left St. Paul on April 7 and reached Red River on April 24; they left April 29.



talking, I went into the room with Riel, and all joined in the conversation, and then it was that Riel three or four times said, with most significant gesture and expression, that his views and Mr. O'Donoghue's were in perfect harmony and accord. He further said that he only desired to save his people from wrong, and to this end should do whatever was necessary. I could not but infer from this, that, if Canada did not accept his terms, he would be in favor of annexation, though from motives of policy, he would not make his views known. He evidently knows that very few people in Manitoba would favor annexation, while the influence of Bishop Taché and Rev. Mr. Black is against it.

I think that the opposition of the Americans at Fort Garry, to Riel, grows out of the impression that he will under no circumstances favor annexation;—but I cannot but think that Riel is secretly in favor of it, and will show his hand when the proper time comes.

The execution of Scott might perhaps have been avoided, though evidently no personal feeling on Riel's part entered into the affair;—and though reports relative to the character of Scott were very contradictory, yet I am inclined to believe that he was a bad man.

With the people and the country as a whole, I was disappointed. They are slow,—50 years behind our times. Government has but little to act upon, and the influence of the leaders must be almost wholly *personal*. There can exist no power over the people that is not of such a nature that it will gain strength by close and intimate association of ruler and ruled, and a governor must be a hero to his valet de chambre, or he can be no hero at all. Riel's adherents though a minority of the population, are by far the most enterprising and progressive;—while the Canadians and Scotch are sluggish, and contented to live as did their ancestors, fifty years ago, and to such people, the untiring energy of Riel is a wonder:—a something of which they stand in awe, and to which they are powerless to oppose any force or obstacle.

Yours truly,  
N. P. LANGFORD

## 522 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

XXV: CIRCULAR LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF THE NORTH-WEST  
FROM LOUIS SCHMIDT, ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE.

[*From a copy in the Archives of the Archbishopric of St. Boniface*].<sup>1</sup>

[Translation]

Provisional Government House,  
Fort Garry, April 7, 1870

Circular.

To the Settlers of the North and North-West.

Fellow citizens,—

You are, no doubt, not ignorant either of the course of events which have occurred at Red River, and which have become established facts, or of the causes which brought them on.

You know how we stopped and sent back over the frontier a Governor that Canada—that other English colony—ignoring our aspirations and our existence as a people, forgetful of the law of nations and our rights as British subjects, wished to impose on us, without consulting us and without even warning us.

You know also that, having been abandoned by our own Government which had sold its title to this country, we saw the need to meet in Council and to recognize the authority of a Provisional Government, which was proclaimed on November 24, 1869.

After many difficulties which the partisans of Canada and of the Hudson's Bay Company raised, that Provisional Government is to-day master of the situation, because all the peoples of the colony have felt the necessity of union and concord, because we have always asserted our British nationality, and because our army, although few in numbers, has always sufficed to hold high the noble standard of liberty and our native land.

Not only has the Provisional Government succeeded in restoring order and in pacifying the country, it has undertaken some very

<sup>1</sup> The final establishment of the Provisional Government, with the assumption of responsibility for the peace and commerce of the North-West, the approaching return of the winterers from the plains, and the need of complete unity *vis-à-vis* Canada, made it necessary to appeal to the *métis* living beyond Red River. The document above is the address referred to in Schmidt's *Memoirs* above as having been compiled by himself and Gay. It was printed in the *New Nation*, April 15, 1870, along with Riel's "Proclamation to the People of the North-West", which may be seen in Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, pp. 918-919, as well as in Begg's *Journal*, April 9, 1870, above.

advantageous negotiations with the Canadian Government, and with the Hudson's Bay Company; you will be kept advised of the results of these negotiations.

Peoples of the North and North-West, you have been strangers neither to the cause for which we have fought, nor to our affections; it is distance and not forgetfulness which have separated us.

Your brothers of Red River, working at the mission which God is imposing on them, feel that they do not act for themselves alone, and that if their position has given them the glory of victors, their victory will have value only so far as you share their joy and their liberty; the conquest of their rights will have worth in their eyes, only if you claim them also.

We have to-day an undisputed hold over almost half a continent; the expulsion or annihilation of the invader has just restored our native land to its children. Broadcast over that vast and rich territory, but united as one man, what matters distance to us, when we are all brothers and the common good is at stake?

Recognized by all classes of people, the government rests on the good will and union of citizens.

While informing you of the political changes which we have made, it is our duty to reassure you as to the future; our hope is that the peoples of the North-West will show themselves worthy of their brothers of Red River.

The Government fears, however, that, for want of understanding its views, the peoples of the North and North-West, influenced by strangers of ill-will, may commit some excess capable of compromising public order. That is why the President of the Provisional Government believes he can do no better than to address himself to all those who love the public welfare and the prosperity of their country, to engage themselves to make known and understood, among those of the half-breeds and Indians, who seek to turn to their own profit the alleged disorders of this troubled time, that the true condition of public affairs is order and peace.

The Government, founded on justice and reason, will never permit disorders to be committed, and those guilty of disorder will not be allowed to go unpunished. It is not to be tolerated that some evil-doers should imperil the interests of a whole people.

Peoples of the North and North-West, this message is a message of peace.

Long enough has war menaced the colony; long enough have we

been in arms to safeguard the country and restore order, troubled by wrong-doers and ruffians.

Our country, so happily surrounded by Providence with natural and almost impenetrable barriers, calls us to union.

After the crisis through which we have passed all feel more than ever that they seek the same goals, that they aspire to the same rights, that they are members of one and the same family.

We hope that you will also feel the need of rallying around the Provisional Government to aid and support it in its work.

By order of the President

LOUIS SCHMIDT

ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE

XXVI: PROTEST OF THE PEOPLES OF THE NORTH-WEST: A  
PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY RIEL, MAY 14, 1870.

[*From a printed copy in the Public Archives of Manitoba, Red River  
Disturbances*].<sup>1</sup>

[Translation]

The present state of excitement against us in certain parts of Canada [amended to "of certain Canadian parties against us"] gives us a fitting occasion to demonstrate the difference between their principles and ours. Is it true that so many Canadian newspapers and so many people who approve them exercise themselves against us simply and sincerely in the interest of the Confederation? Is it in the interest of England? If it is so, how is it that Snow, Dennis, McDougall, and so many other recipients of sympathy principally in Upper Canada, should have chosen ways so tortuous, and should have sought so deviously to deceive the people to throw them into an agitation as great as it is general? The men of Upper Canada, with whom we have avoided all sorts of frays during the last six

<sup>1</sup> This proclamation has apparently not hitherto been published. It is not in Begg's *Journal* and no reference is made to it in *The Creation of Manitoba*; neither does it appear in the *New Nation*. It was, however, summarized in the St. Paul newspapers and copied in the *Canadian*. It was printed in French, but may not have been distributed in the Settlement. The proclamation is a protest against the outcry in Ontario, of which No. XXII is an example. By repeating the statement of principles on which the Resistance was based, the proclamation seeks to establish the consistency and validity of the Provisional Government.



months, have sought to divide us, to arouse us one against the other, to bring us to the horrible collision of a civil war! Has not civil war been proclaimed in our midst? And those who have dared to do so, have they not usurped, in an infamous manner, the name of Her Majesty? As many outsiders as we have been constrained, at different times, to make prisoners, have they not been generously set at liberty again, when we knew that they would hasten to do against us the evil that they are raising to-day in Upper Canada, perjuring themselves the while? And because one of those who through obstinacy continued to trouble the public peace, which they alone had put in jeopardy amongst us, and which we made so many efforts to keep in the North-West, has forced us to make an example of him by which others might learn, they wish to declare war on us, while Sir John A. Macdonald, the Prime Minister, is compelled in justice to say that Canada has no jurisdiction in the country. No, those people have not worked and are not working in the interest of England! They concern themselves with the Confederation only so far as they believe it necessary to the success of their plans, of which the aims are too personal and too exclusive to be just! These persons through a great lack of honesty and loyalty have thought to impose on us a supremacy altogether to be condemned, to achieve which these false British subjects have not wanted and do not wish to respect the rights of anyone in a British colony. They flattered themselves with the shameful hope of being able to combine their selfish projects with those of Imperial policy in British North America. There is one thing they have forgotten: the policy of a government having to concern itself with the general interests of society, without distinction of language, of origin, without distinction of religious belief, is always incompatible with the restricted views of individual interest, when the latter, in place of imposing itself on the former, is not entirely subordinate to it. They should have known it: the sole means of assuring the existence and extension of the Confederation is to place on the same equal and generous footing all the provinces of British North America. If it is true that the Hudson's Bay Company has neglected the political advancement of their country, the people themselves, as soon as they could, have had to act. They have formed a government, and this government which calls itself provisional does not wish that the North-West enter into Confederation until in this country all claims of civilized men shall have received a guarantee of being on the same noble footing of equality.

In the month of October last, when the first representatives of the

people of Red River had first publicly assembled to take, in the name of their constituents, the title and function of "Protectors of the rights of the people," they declared:—

1. That they were loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of England.
2. That they were beholden to the Hudson's Bay Company for the well-being they had enjoyed under its government, whatever the nature of that government.
3. That the Hudson's Bay Company being about to lay down the government of the country they were ready to accept the change involved. But at the same time being settlers, having lived on the lands which they had assisted the Hudson's Bay Company to open up, the people of Red River, having acquired in that fashion indisputable rights in the country, proudly asserted those rights.
4. That the people of Red River having up to this time upheld and supported the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, under the Crown of England, Snow and Dennis have disregarded the law of nations in coming to carry out here public works in the name of an alien authority without paying the respect owing to the authority then existing in the country.
5. The Colony of Red River having always been subject to the Crown of England, having been developed in isolation, through all the hazards of its situation, these representatives declared in the name of their constituents, that they would do all in their power to have respected, on their behalf, all the privileges so liberally granted by the Crown of England to any English colony whatever.

These principles have been published in Canada in the month of November last.<sup>1</sup> They are still as they were then the line of conduct of the Provisional Government. The English flag which floats over our heads displays fully to the eyes of the world its grand testimony in our favour. Filled with confidence in these principles which are our strength, we do not consider that they are loyal subjects of Her Majesty the Queen of England who have wished to make war on us up to now, and who would wish still to wage it on us, because of the way we have conducted ourselves under these resolutions. In order to ruin us, and raise themselves on our ruins, they have always held us to be barbarians. However, the magnitude of our great difficulties has never led us to call to our aid the dangerous element of the wild Indian tribes. On the

<sup>1</sup> That is, in the *Courrier de Saint-Hyacinthe* ; see p. 411.

contrary, while we have spared ourselves no effort to keep them quiet, these others have just sent across our country where their government has no jurisdiction, some agents for the criminal purpose of creating enemies for us among the Indians. But we hope that Providence will aid us to complete the pacification of the North-West; we hope that the authority of the Crown of England will assist the solution of the great complications which have been caused by a major political impudence.

Our cause is that of a British colony! Our cause is that of liberty! God and the world know how we have been outraged.

People whom progress and civilization fill with ambition border us on one side and on the other numerous wild tribes who live on the alert and in apprehension. The people of Red River is sprung from these two great divisions in order to serve both as intermediary. In effect we are bound to both by blood and by custom.

The Province of Ontario in arresting our delegates that the Federal Government had invited by three special commissions has just committed an act against which we protest in the name of all the peoples of the North-West. We denounce the opprobriousness of such a proceeding to all civilized people; we appeal to the law of nations which Upper Canada has always disregarded where we are concerned, which the Federal Government has not done itself the honour to uphold, but which we claim before God and before men in every way open to us and in every way which shall be open to us.

LOUIS RIEL

PRESIDENT

(In script)

Seat of the Provisional Government,  
Fort Garry, May 14, 1870

XXVII: MEMOIR BY LOUIS RIEL ON THE COURSE AND PURPOSE OF  
THE RED RIVER RESISTANCE, WRITTEN IN 1874.

[*Reproduced from a photostatic copy in the Public Archives of Canada*].<sup>1</sup>

[Translation]

The North-West Territories were transferred to Canada only on

<sup>1</sup> The original is in private hands. The body of the memoir is in Riel's handwriting and bears his signature; the title is in the hand of Dr. E. P. Lachapelle, 132 Rue St. Laurent, Montreal, and the text is certified by him as being by Riel, under the date January 22, 1874.

The Memoir is printed in part in *Le Métis*, III (37), February 21, 1874, and in



July 15, 1870.<sup>1</sup> But the Canadian government had begun, in '68-'69, some public works in its own name in Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory,<sup>2</sup> without the authorization of the government of the Hudson's Bay Company.<sup>3</sup> The arrival of the Canadian agents, in that country, was marked by the contempt they displayed for the authority of the Company itself and for the old settlers. They sought to seize the best lands of the *métis*, especially at Oak Point, a parish established about 30 miles to the east of Fort Garry. They claimed to buy these lands from the Indians.<sup>4</sup> And to strengthen themselves at the beginning of the struggle against us, they sought to form an alliance with the Indians, and to get the latter on their side sold them intoxicating liquors contrary to the law!<sup>5</sup> Besides, the superintendent of the Canadian works at Oak Point, Mr. Snow, and also his subordinates conducted themselves very badly: on one occasion they came near murdering one another. One of the workmen, Thos. Scott who was later executed, put a pistol to the head of his employer and seizing him with a gang of men as violent as himself, he dragged him to the river meaning to drown him. Some *métis* saved the superintendent from the hands of his workmen who were to a

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whole in III (38), February 28, 1874. *Le Métis* of March 14, 1874, refers to its being widely published and extensively discussed in the French press of Quebec. It was printed as a pamphlet at the office of *Le Nouveau Monde*, 1874: P.A.C., Catalogue of Pamphlets, 1, No. 3960: *Mémoire sur les causes des troubles du nord-ouest et sur le négociation qui ont amené leur règlement amiable par M. Louis Riel, Président de l'ex-gouvernement Provisoire*. The substance of the memoir was also printed in the form of a representation by Riel and Lépine, dated January 2, 1873, to the Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba, which was printed in English translation in the *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, pp. 200-207.

<sup>1</sup> *United Kingdom: Privy Council*, June 23, 1870; Oliver, *Canadian North-West*, II, pp. 939-963.

<sup>2</sup> On the construction of the Dawson Road under John A. Snow, and on the survey of the lands of the North-West under J. S. Dennis.

<sup>3</sup> Both undertakings had been approved by the local Governor, William Mactavish; but only the surveys had been approved beforehand by the Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company.

<sup>4</sup> There was some claim-staking, both by Snow and Schultz, and by some of Dennis's surveyors.

<sup>5</sup> There may have been some *sale* of liquor to Indians; Snow was indeed convicted of it. But most of the foundation for this reiterated charge seems to have been some *treating* of Indians to induce them to tolerate the claim-staking. Both were reprehensible, of course, but would have been as serious as Riel implies only if left completely unchecked. It is not to be supposed that they would have been.



great extent from Ontario.<sup>1</sup> One can imagine that in acting in this fashion, these strangers gave the settlers an impression of themselves which was not at all favourable.

The authorities of the Hudson's Bay Company were obliged to take severe measures against these disorders. And they protested to the Canadian government, less because of the bad conduct of its employees than for their having undertaken, without authority, public works on their territory.<sup>2</sup> After Mr. Snow had begun the work on the Dawson Road between the Lake of the Woods and Oak Point, in '68, in the name of Canada, another intruder from the same country had in the summer of '69 also begun to survey around Fort Garry public and private lands, according to a new system of survey, upsetting without any explanation whatsoever<sup>3</sup> the settled order of things, and troubling without compunction the old settlers in the peaceful and legal possession of their lands.

The protests of the government of the Hudson's Bay Company were soon followed by those of the settlers who opposed themselves resolutely to the fact that men as suspect as these should in so unwarranted a fashion open public roads and lay out surveys on their lands, in the name of a foreign government.

At the same time, Mr. McDougall presented himself at the border at Pembina. Everyone said that he was sent, by Canada, to govern us. In fact, he brought with him a Council entirely composed of men whom we knew nothing about.<sup>4</sup> But as chief title to our respect, a considerable consignment of rifles followed close behind them.

The alarmed *métis* organized themselves "in a national committee" and went to meet Mr. McDougall, sending him some messengers to tell him specifically not to enter their country in that fashion. Mr. McDougall made an insulting and disdainful reply.<sup>5</sup> Many adventurers,

<sup>1</sup> Riel's account is substantially true, except that probably the men meant no more than to duck Snow. There was another side to the matter; see note 3 on p. 173.

<sup>2</sup> The Governor and Committee did protest against the undertaking of the Dawson Road in 1868 (P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 101, *Report of Delegates Appointed to Negotiate for the Acquisition of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories*). This was to keep their title clear while the negotiations with the Imperial Government for the transfer were proceeding.

<sup>3</sup> See No. XVII above for an account of the explanation made by Dennis.

<sup>4</sup> The Honourable William McDougall was accompanied by three Councillors-designate, out of a minimum number of seven and a maximum of fifteen.

<sup>5</sup> McDougall reported that he paid no attention to the messenger who gave him the warning not to enter (C.S.P., 1870 (12), pp. 5-6, McDougall to Howe, October 31,

hangers-on of Mr. Snow and Colonel Dennis, who at the time claimed to be the surveyor-general, had been involved with them, whether at Oak Point in working on the Canadian road, or in the rest of the country, in beginning there the survey of lands; and they had already declared that they had come from Ontario, in advance of Mr. McDougall, as a military force,<sup>1</sup> being fully decided to impose Mr. McDougall on us as governor by strong-arm methods if necessary. And that gentleman, moreover, had no sooner arrived at Pembina than these filibusters spoke openly of possessing themselves of Fort Garry, the centre of our public affairs.

Furthermore, the English government, the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, had not informed us of any change. Neither one nor the other mentioned Mr. McDougall to us, or his council.<sup>2</sup> Mr. McDougall was therefore an intruder. We repelled him on November 1, 1869. And on the 3rd<sup>3</sup> we entered Fort Garry and we undertook to guard it against the sudden attacks which threatened it.

Only then did the Canadian government draw back before the effect of the unrest caused by its encroachments and the misdeeds of its agents. It asked England to defer the time of the transfer, insinuating that the Hudson's Bay Company had not acted in good faith towards it, seeing that in selling all its chartered rights to Canada, it had not warned it of the troubles which disturbed its territory.<sup>4</sup>

But Lord Granville definitely put his finger on the premature rôle which the Canadian government had begun to play in the North-West. On November 30, 1869, he told the Governor-General that the troubles which had broken out in these territories were caused by the very conduct of the Canadian government.

Because of all these facts, and since the Imperial authorities have judged it fitting to rebuke the cabinet at Ottawa in this fashion, it has always seemed strange to the people of Assiniboia to hear themselves, in official and other Canadian documents, described as a wild and

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1869), but he was courteous to Lépine and Lavallée when they came to expel him (*ibid.*, p. 30, McDougall to Howe, November 4, 1869).

<sup>1</sup> It was a fact that Dennis's assistants were to a man militia officers or cadets, some of whom were said to have brought their uniforms with them. This probably innocent fact of course aroused suspicion.

<sup>2</sup> This was perfectly true.

<sup>3</sup> Actually on November 2.

<sup>4</sup> At this point Riel begins to document his memoir from the Bluebook issued by the Canadian Government: *Canada: Correspondence and Papers connected with Recent Occurrences in the North-West Territories* (Ottawa, 1870), cited here as C.S.P., 1870 (12).

rebellious race of people, on the ground that we were not willing to submit to the arbitrary proceedings of the Canadian government.

On the date of November 17, 1869, and the following days, the pretended friends of Canada in Winnipeg had written to Mr. McDougall, then sojourning at Pembina, to have him proclaim without delay the transfer of the North-West Territories to the Canadian government. They were not concerned whether the Queen had carried out the transfer or not. What they wished was the overturning as soon as possible of the government of the Hudson's Bay Company and the advent, by any means whatever, of that of Mr. McDougall.<sup>1</sup>

On November 16, the National Committee of the *métis* had assembled at Fort Garry in the Courthouse, a convention of 24 delegates from all sections of the country, of whom 12 were English-speaking and 12 French-speaking. The purpose of that convention was to agree on what measures to take to protect the interests of the settlers of Assiniboia against the dangers of the situation. It had sat on the 16th and the 17th of November. But the 18th being a day set by the government of the Hudson's Bay Company for the holding of the quarterly sessions of the General Court, the convention, to testify its complete respect for authority, adjourned until the Court should close its proceedings.

The National Committee of the *métis*, however, took its precautions in order that our public affairs should not, by a piece of trickery, fall into the hands of a sham Lieutenant-Governor from Canada, who chose his friends and hearkened to advice from men whose conduct was openly hostile to the interests of the *métis* and the old settlers. On November 24 the National Committee, wishing to protect the public accounts and funds from the plot that the friends of Mr. McDougall were weaving, put a strong guard around the books and funds<sup>2</sup> in question.

Mr. McDougall allowed himself to be won over on December 1, and arrogated to himself the right to proclaim the annexation of Rupert's Land and the North-West to Canada, and as our government of the Hudson's Bay Company was already so much weakened by the violence

<sup>1</sup> Riel may be right in alleging that the Canadian party was indifferent to the formal completion of the transfer ; but in the absence of evidence it must be supposed that they were urging McDougall to act, as he did, at the supposed time of the transfer.

<sup>2</sup> In his *Journal*, November 23, Begg says that the books and money were seized. Riel's statement puts the matter in a different light, and in the absence of evidence that the public money was used before December 1 by the Provisional Government, it must be allowed to stand.



of the struggle that the reckless friends of Canada and its agents had forced on it, especially in the last year, Mr. McDougall took it upon himself to proclaim its dissolution. He proclaimed himself governor, and to all these spurious proclamations, he added a proclamation of open war against us.

Colonel Dennis, now Surveyor-General, received from Mr. McDougall with his commission to make war on us the title of Lieutenant and Conservator of the Peace. These men attacked us unjustly, illegally in the name of the Canadian government. They desired only war.<sup>1</sup> . . . Have we not met war with war?

Dr. Schultz with some fifty armed men was blockaded in his house by the National Committee of the *métis* which had 800 men at command. Schultz and the most part of his 50 partisans had been regarded for some time by our authorities as disturbers of the public peace. And they had often spoken of undertaking to chase the *métis* as far as the Rocky Mountains, in order to rid the environs of Fort Garry of their presence.<sup>2</sup> What have we done with these men, once they were at our mercy? . . . The town of Winnipeg had the generosity to intercede in their favour. The National Committee of the *métis* left the besieged free to surrender and contented itself with putting them in prison, after having granted their lives to all. That was on December 7, 1869.

Then as we were without government, exposed to anarchy,<sup>3</sup> wholly concerned with the care of preserving our lives and property, we proclaimed on December 8, the formation and the authority of a Provisional Government which at once met with the approval and support of a great part of the people. Because of the circumstances which had given rise to it that government was legal.

Let us consider the place which it held in public estimate.

<sup>1</sup> In the original, the page ends here. It would seem, however, that no mutilation had occurred, as the text continues in sequence, and the printed version in *Le Métis* of February 28 contains no intervening material.

<sup>2</sup> This accusation is so often repeated that one is forced to feel that there must have been some ground for it. If there were, it is to be regretted, but it is also to be regretted that Riel and the *métis* should have believed that the Canadian government would have tolerated such injustice. What was expected, rather than intended, as the Prime Minister of Canada himself wrote, was that the *métis* and all old settlers would be "swamped" by a Canadian immigration: P.A.C., Macdonald Papers, 516, Macdonald to J. Y. Bown, October 13, 1869: "In another year the present residents will be altogether swamped. . . ."

<sup>3</sup> For discussion of this point, see the Introduction, p. 77.



Eight days after it had been proclaimed, the Honourable Privy Council of Canada, basing its judgement on the circumstances, itself said that the existence of that government was legal. One can confirm the validity of that statement, by reading the report of one of its committees, written by Sir John A. Macdonald himself, under date of December 16, 1869, and addressed to the Colonial Office in England.<sup>1</sup>

From the month of January, 1870, the Canadian commissioners, Reverend Mr. J. B. Thibault and Colonel de Salaberry, officially recognized our Provisional Government: they addressed themselves directly to it in order to explain to the people the good intentions which the Canadian government had instructed them to make known on its behalf in Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories.<sup>2</sup> Mr. D. A. Smith contrived, thanks to a slow and painstaking effort, to obtain some days after, at Fort Garry, a mass meeting of the residents of the country. In view of the agitation of different political opinions, at that particular time, a meeting so inclusive had very many dangers. But as Mr. D. A. Smith was determined to have that meeting, in order to explain in person to the public that which he had to communicate to them on behalf of Canada, the Provisional Government made ready to meet the exigencies of the situation. And the President of the Government set the day and the hour on which the people could meet to hear Mr. Smith. The meeting took place on January 19 and continued during two days.

Several times civil war was on the point of breaking out in the midst of that excited crowd. But each time, God be thanked, the precautionary measures adopted by the Provisional Government succeeded in suppressing all disorder.

Mr. D. A. Smith was heard. And here in summary is what he told us in his capacity as Special Commissioner. "In Confederation," he said to us, "all civil and religious rights of the old settlers are to be scrupulously respected. Moreover the Queen has ordered her Governor-General of Canada, in the event of peace being re-established, according to her expressed will, in the North-West Territories, to extend a general amnesty over all the troubles which have recently unhappily manifested

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, p. 68, and No. XIII above.

<sup>2</sup> Thibault and de Salaberry did indeed deal directly with the Provisional Government, or at least with Riel and the persons professing to compose it. They were, of course, not authorized to do so, and certainly no more is to be made of their actions than Riel in fact does.

themselves in that part of her Empire. As a result, the Governor-General of Canada had drawn up a proclamation in that sense for the residents of the North-West. But, stating that that proclamation had not come to the knowledge of the people of the country, Mr. Smith, the Special Commissioner, told us that he was authorized to advise us of the substance of that Proclamation."

At the end of that important meeting, the President of the Provisional Government asked the people to resolve that a Convention of 40 delegates should meet, representing all the country, and instructed to take into consideration what Mr. D. A. Smith had just told us, and instructed to make, in the circumstances, a public decision conformable with our best interests.<sup>1</sup> The people gave such complete approval to the proposal of the President of the Provisional Government, that on January 25, that being the day set for it, the 40 delegates, after having been elected by the people, met at the Courthouse at Fort Garry, in order to carry out their mandate.

The President of the Provisional Government himself nominated a chairman for that Convention.<sup>2</sup> And it discussed for more than a fortnight the conditions of our entrance into Confederation. It invited Rev. J. B. Thibault, Colonel de Salaberry, and Mr. D. A. Smith to sit in one of its sessions, in order to receive officially the communications sent by the Canadian government through those three gentlemen. All three attended.<sup>3</sup> Messrs. Thibault and de Salaberry said that they were commissioned to assure us on behalf of Canada that its government had only one purpose: that of governing us in such a way as to respect all our rights and to administer the affairs of the country so as to conduce to the greatest welfare of all its inhabitants. Mr. D. A. Smith reiterated what he had already said to us in the mass meeting which had taken place at Fort Garry.

Before taking leave of the Convention these three gentlemen invited, in the name of Canada, the people of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territory, to send delegates to Ottawa in order to come to a

<sup>1</sup> The motion accepted by the mass meeting to call a Convention of Forty was moved by Riel and seconded by A. G. B. Bannatyne: *Begg's Journal*, January 20; *New Nation*, January 21, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See *Begg's Journal*, January 26. Riel, presumably as a member of the Convention, nominated Judge Black, and the Convention elected him chairman.

<sup>3</sup> As far as Smith was concerned, he attended the Convention as representing the people, not as a body called into being by the Provisional Government.

friendly understanding. And in the name of their government they promised our delegates a cordial reception.

The invitation thus made to the people was accepted by the Convention in the name of the people.

The President of the Provisional Government having, after that, commented to the Convention on the perilous state into which the usurpations of Mr. McDougall had plunged us, and having drawn its attention to the necessity we were in, in order to overcome anarchy, to strengthen the Provisional Government that half the settlers had proclaimed on December 8, 1869, but to which the other half had not yet given its adhesion; and having led it to consider that that government claimed the support of all citizens not only to maintain the public peace effectively, but even more in order to treat advantageously with Canada, the Convention confirmed by the unanimous consent of all the people it represented the establishment of the Provisional Government.<sup>1</sup> And by a special vote, more than thirty of the forty delegates confirmed in the position of President of the government him who, in succession to Mr. John Bruce, had held that office since December 27, 1869.<sup>2</sup>

His Honour Judge Black had until then presided over the deliberations of the Convention. But immediately after that vote, at the wish of the Convention itself, he yielded the chair to the President of the Provisional Government, who, on the spot, nominated Judge Black, Reverend Mr. Ritchot and Alfred H. Scott, delegates to Ottawa; congratulated the convention on its patriotism, dissolved and dismissed it.<sup>3</sup>

The next day, February 12, the Secretary of State of the Provisional

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, pp. 98-99.

<sup>2</sup> See Introduction, p. 99.

<sup>3</sup> See No. x above. There is a report of the close of the Convention which will bear this construction. That in the *New Nation* of February 18, 1870, the only contemporary report in any detail, reads: "The question of sending delegates to Canada was again brought up [after Riel's election by the Convention as President] by Mr. Ross and Mr. Bunn, but was opposed on the same grounds as before [that the Convention had no power to send delegates] by the President and Treasurer [O'Donoghue] of the new Government.

"Soon after a vote of thanks was passed to the chairman (Judge Black), and the Convention adjourned for an hour.

"The following delegates were then nominated by the President and ultimately elected, Rev. Mr. Ritchot, Judge Black, Alfred H. Scott.

"In the case of Mr. Scott, there was some opposition on the score that a Half-breed ought to be elected; but ultimately his nomination was confirmed and the Convention adjourned *sine die*."

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Government wrote to the reverend curé of St. Norbert the following official letter.<sup>1</sup>

Fort Garry, February 12, 1870  
Reverend J. N. Ritchot,  
St. Norbert, G.R.R.

Reverend Sir,

I am directed to inform you that you have been nominated by the President of the North-West Territories, as co-commissioner, with John Black and Alfred H. Scott, esquires, to negotiate with the government of the Dominion of Canada the terms of entrance into the Confederation.

I am,

Reverend Sir,

Your obedient servant,

THOS. BUNN,

SECRETARY

Scarcely had people begun to draw their breath in quiet, two days were not gone by, when the partisans of Dr. Schultz and of Mr. McDougall caused a rising of 7 to 8 hundred men to break out.

It is known that Dr. Schultz had been imprisoned on December 7, 1869. But during the election of 40 representatives to the Convention, he had escaped, on January 22. When he saw that he could not in any way influence the decisions of the convention he laboured to destroy its work, by urging the people to upset the Provisional Government that it had crowned its efforts by establishing.<sup>2</sup> His supporters assembled at St. Andrew's, a place situated on the Red River about 10 miles to the north of Fort Garry. On the 14th, 15th and 16th of February, they remained marshalled there, pell-mell with 2 or 3 hundred savages, getting ready to march on Fort Garry.<sup>3</sup> In that disorderly assemblage

<sup>1</sup> The original of this document has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> The account of the February rising which follows is of considerable interest, because the English narratives always stress the primacy of the Portage rising and of the object of freeing of the prisoners, whereas this stresses the determination of Schultz to challenge and defeat Riel's policy of negotiating with Canada with a united Settlement behind him, and the greater importance of the St. Andrew's rising. Note also how the description of the strategy of the risings is supported by Begg's account of events in the *Journal*, February 14 and February 17, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> The St. Andrew's men reached Kildonan on February 15, 1870.



of Indians and whites, two murders were committed: that of the unfortunate Sutherland<sup>1</sup> who had never taken any part in our troubles; and that of Parisien,<sup>2</sup> one of the warmest partisans of Dr. Schultz and Mr. McDougall. The friends of Dr. Schultz had hastened to spread throughout the country runners with orders to begin the war at several points at once, in order to force the *métis* soldiers to leave Fort Garry and to come to the aid of their families, hoping thus to take possession easily of the most considerable place in the country.

The Provisional Government arrested several of these runners. When the nature of the despatches which these men had consented to carry was known to the *métis* soldiers, the latter indignantly demanded, all of them, captains and soldiers, that the most guilty, William Gaddy,<sup>3</sup> who had made himself the bearer of such orders in his own native country, should be shot on the spot. He was led to one of the bastions of the Fort to be executed there.

The good offices of many leading and peace-loving citizens, and a warning that the President of the Provisional Government himself addressed to the rebels,<sup>4</sup> eventually moderated that attitude of the *métis*, and led to a large number dispersing towards the evening of February 16.

Let us return to William Gaddy. Everybody believed him dead. But he was full of life, thanks to commanding officers, A. D. Lépine<sup>5</sup> and Elzéar Goulet<sup>6</sup> who, by their efforts, had allowed him to escape from the popular condemnation by having him feign death in his out-of-the-way bastion.

It is thus that noble spirits, like A. D. Lépine, now a political prisoner, in Manitoba,<sup>7</sup> and Elzéar Goulet,<sup>8</sup> who was assassinated, in full daylight, in the middle of the town of Winnipeg, and without any punishment

<sup>1</sup> See note 1 on p. 105.

<sup>2</sup> See note 2 on p. 309.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1 on p. 286.

<sup>4</sup> See note 1 on p. 312, containing Riel's letter to the assembly at Kildonan.

<sup>5</sup> See note 2 on p. 238.

<sup>6</sup> See note 1 on p. 345.

<sup>7</sup> Lépine was arrested on September 15, 1873, and tried for the murder of Thomas Scott on September 23, 1874. He was convicted and condemned to death. The sentence was commuted to five years' imprisonment and the permanent loss of political rights.

<sup>8</sup> Elzéar Goulet was attacked in the streets of Winnipeg in September, 1870, by a group alleged to have been, in part at least, Canadian volunteers of the Wolseley expedition. Goulet was pursued to the Red River and stoned while attempting to swim the river. He drowned in the attempt, whether because he was struck by a stone, or because he was an inexperienced swimmer, has never been proved. No arrest was made on account of his death. This shameful event was one of a number of deeds of violence which followed the end of the Resistance. See A. G. Morice, *The Red River Insurrection* (Winnipeg, 1935), chap. XVII. Goulet was an American citizen:

following, a short time after the arrival of Colonel Wolseley and of the Canadian Lieutenant-Governor in our Province, were pleased to treat their enemies.

On the morning of February 17 there appeared on the open plain, two miles from Fort Garry, a troop of 48 armed men, at the head of which were several of the chief conspirators, friends of Dr. Schultz. Lépine, Adjutant-General, took 30 horsemen with him and a hundred men on foot, and instead of wiping out that handful of enemies, he marched right up to them, made them give up their arms and brought them captive within the walls. It seems to me that that was a generous way of exercising the laws of war. The life of Major Boulton only, leader of the party, was to pay the score for the others. When Mr. D. A. Smith asked the President of the Provisional Government, to grant him mercy, the President replied that, in spite of all, Boulton would certainly be spared if all the settlements which had rebelled against the work of the Convention, would definitely recognize and support the Provisional Government.<sup>1</sup>

At the suggestion of the President himself, whose main aim it was to re-establish peace without the shedding of blood, Mr. D. A. Smith went to all the rebel settlements and by his influence as a Hudson's Bay Company man and as Special Commissioner of the Canadian Government, he won them all to resolve to sustain the Provisional Government. Boulton was saved!

As may be seen, not only had Mr. D. A. Smith, official of the Hudson's Bay Company and of Canada, himself recognized our Provisional Government,<sup>2</sup> but, still more, he had laboured to have it recognized and supported so generally by the whole country.

This simple account of the principal facts which took place during our troubles from the fall of 1868 until the last part of the month of February, 1870, added to the testimony of Lord Granville, proves, 1st, that the Canadian government provoked the disturbances which broke out in the North-West Territories, relative to the transfer of those territories to the Dominion. Consequently the responsibility for those disturbances falls on the Canadian Government.

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U.S.N.A., Department of State, Consular Reports, Winnipeg, I, Robinson to Davis, September 16, 1870, No. 49.

<sup>1</sup> This bare narrative suggests by its succinctness that the prisoners were seized as hostages for the good behaviour of the parishes lately in revolt.

<sup>2</sup> Nothing better illustrates Riel's constant incapacity to realize that men were not likely to feel bound by pledges given under duress.

From this simple account it appears, 2nd, that it is the agents of Canada who, in destroying little by little, in 1869, the government of the Hudson's Bay Company, had compelled the residents of those territories to provide themselves with a Provisional Government of which the legality is by so much the more certain, (1), because it rests on the law of nations; (2) because it had been admitted by the Honourable Privy Council for Canada, by one of its committees (December 16, 1869);<sup>1</sup> (3) because the Provisional Government itself has received the support of the whole country of which it had become, after the Crown, by force of exceptional circumstances, the principal defence;<sup>2</sup> (4) because this same Provisional Government has enjoyed the official recognition of three Canadian Commissioners whom I have the honour to mention, Messrs. D. A. Smith, Rev. J. B. Thibault and Colonel de Salaberry;<sup>3</sup> (5) because the Provisional Government had been invited officially by Canada to negotiate with its government to settle amicably with it the conditions of our entry into the Confederation.

Mr. D. A. Smith, in his capacity of Special Commissioner, even agreed with the President of the Provisional Government, at Fort Garry, that all the necessary public charges incurred by the Provisional Government by the despatch of delegates to Ottawa would be paid by the Canadian treasury itself. And that is just what was done.

Strong in all these guarantees and strong especially in our unbroken allegiance to the Crown, the Provisional Government was getting ready towards the end of February to arrange the departure of its delegates for Ottawa, when new disorders absorbed its attention.

Dr. Schultz had not *for a moment* ceased to urge the Indians to make war upon us. A great number of residents of Portage la Prairie aided him in that barbarous task.

Portage la Prairie is a settlement on the Assiniboine river some 60

<sup>1</sup> See No. XIII above.

<sup>2</sup> In his despatch of December 10, 1874, on the commutation of Lépine's sentence, Dufferin refused to accept this argument that the Provisional Government had been recognized by the Convention of Forty (P.A.C., G. 21, 12 : Despatches regarding Commutation of Lépine's Sentence and North-West Amnesty). That body, he wrote, had not been elected for the purpose, and had no authority to recognize or establish a provisional government. Riel's argument is not despicable; Dufferin's rebuttal is telling, but perhaps the chief consideration is that neither would have been necessary had it not been for the event which follows in the memoir, the shooting of Thomas Scott.

<sup>3</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 21.



miles to the west of Fort Garry, and of which the greatest part of the population was composed of immigrants from Ontario.

In the last days of February these men assumed, with all the Indians of the country, especially with those of their neighbourhood, a posture so threatening that the *métis* ranged along the Assiniboine river between Fort Garry and Portage la Prairie, fearing for their families and their possessions which their enemies at the Portage openly spoke of coming to massacre and burn in a night-raid, besought immediate protection from the Provisional Government. Their fears seemed all the better founded in that, on the occasion of the tour of pacification which Mr. D. A. Smith had had the generosity to make among the residents of the Portage, those people, then as devoted to Dr. Schultz as they were hostile to the old settlers, had written to the President of the Provisional Government that to obtain mercy for Boulton, they would submit, but that they would certainly rise again at the first opportunity.<sup>1</sup> For the safety of the citizens, two detachments of *métis* soldiers were then stationed on the Assiniboine<sup>2</sup> river. One was at Lane's post,<sup>3</sup> 24 miles from Fort Garry, the other at Baie St. Paul, ten miles farther on.

The boldness of our enemies, however, encouraged by our patience, had become extreme. It even broke out among the prisoners of war that we had taken on February 17, even within the walls of Fort Garry.

It was necessary to put an end to all that. It was necessary to inflict a condign punishment on the plotters and madmen.

At the beginning of December, 1869, Thos. Scott had been made prisoner at Fort Garry, after Mr. McDougall had declared war on us, as one of the most dangerous partisans of Dr. Schultz, of McDougall and of Dennis. A short while after,<sup>4</sup> Scott escaped from our hands, and sought refuge at Portage la Prairie. In the month of February, 1870, at the very moment in which the Convention of Forty Delegates was consolidating the Provisional Government in the name of all the people, Thomas Scott came down from Portage, with a band of armed men to revolt, he, Scott, showing himself one of the most ardent, forcing over an

<sup>1</sup> No other evidence to this effect has been found. See A. H. de Trémaudan (ed.), "The Execution of Thomas Scott," *Canadian Historical Review*, September, 1925, p. 234.

<sup>2</sup> See Begg's *Journal*, February 24.

<sup>3</sup> Lane's Post. See note 2 on p. 321.

<sup>4</sup> January 9, 1870.



area little short of 40 miles a number of peaceable citizens to take up arms in spite of themselves and follow him.<sup>1</sup>

He and his companions, after thus collecting about a hundred men as far as the Parish of Headingley which is situated 15 or 16 miles to the west of Fort Garry, on the Assiniboine river, pursued their march along the Assiniboine river as far as Fort Garry. There had not yet passed forty-eight hours since the representatives of the whole country in convention assembled had definitely and finally established the Provisional Government.<sup>2</sup> Scott in revolt against that authority, entered in warlike guise into the town of Winnipeg. At the head of his troop, he sought to seize the person of the President of the Provisional Government, surrounding for that purpose a house in which the President was in the habit of staying. But failing altogether to surprise him there, they went on to join at St. Andrew's the tumultuous assemblage of Indians and whites on which Dr. Schultz exercised his influence to so great a degree. It was there and by the persons making up that assembly that the unfortunate Sutherland and Parisien were murdered.

On February 17 when Boulton was taken with his 47 men, with arms in their hands under the walls of Fort Garry, once more Scott was one of them. Thus captured for the second time, Scott did not fail to distinguish himself in prison by the violence of his conduct, which exceeded all bounds, especially on the first of March. On that day, Thos. Scott and M. McLeod forced the doors of their prison, threw themselves on the guards, (and) urged their companions to do the same. The *métis* who had always treated their prisoners with great consideration were so indignant in view of these outrages that they drew Scott outside the establishment and were going to put him to death, when one of their representatives released him. All demanded that Scott be taken before a Council of War. It must not be imagined that Scott was at once delivered to a court-martial. The President of the Provisional Government sought to avoid that extremity, by having Scott brought before him. He invited him to consider his position seriously, begging him, so to speak, whatever were his convictions, to be silent and remain quiet in prison ; so that, said the President, I may have a reason for

<sup>1</sup> There is little corroborative evidence of men being forced to join the Portage party, and it seems improbable. But see Begg's *Journal*, March 5, 1870, for John Taylor's statement that he was forced to join the Portage party.

<sup>2</sup> This was known to Scott and his companions.

preventing your being brought before the Council of the Adjutant-General, as the *métis* soldiers loudly insist.

Scott scorned everybody, and persisted in his defiant conduct.

From hour to hour, new troubles were expected to break out. These troubles would put the lives of citizens in jeopardy again; they tended to thwart the departure of our delegates. They could not fail to be favourable to Dr. Schultz who, unable to remain in Red River,<sup>1</sup> betook himself to Ontario in order to raise the populace there against the Provisional Government, to attempt to hinder our delegates being received officially by the Canadian government and to attempt to give preference at Ottawa to a delegation from the North-West of his own choosing.

The third of March we made Scott appear before a council of war. He was examined with sworn testimony: he was convicted and condemned to death.

The next day, March 4, 1870, that authority of the government that had been provisionally entrusted to us for the welfare of an English colony and which we had used, during three months of bitter struggles, only to disarm our enemies, we wielded at last in all its severity: Scott was executed, our motive being that of making order triumph and of thus discharging our duty in punishing a guilty man.

And now, beyond the fact that Canada has nothing to do legally with that execution, is it reasonable that it should bring up against certain individuals that which was the act of a government; and that it should treat as vile murderers the members and officers of a government of which the legality is certain, with which it had itself negotiated, in full view of everybody during almost a whole session of Parliament?

Four days after the execution of Scott, His Grace, Monsignor Taché arrived in our midst.<sup>2</sup> Recalled from Rome, by the Canadian government among others, His Grace returned to the North-West, charged by Canada to work for a genuine understanding between the two countries. His Grace repeated now to the President of the Provisional

<sup>1</sup> Schultz had left the Settlement about the beginning of March. For an account of the unrest in the Settlement, see Begg's *Journal*, February 21 to 24, and de Trémaudan, "Letter of Louis Riel, 1873" (*Canadian Historical Review*, June, 1926, pp. 148-149). It is this combination of fear of another rising and unrest among the prisoners, that makes the execution of Scott as an example intelligible, even if it does not make it pardonable.

<sup>2</sup> Scott was shot on March 4, Taché arrived on March 9 in St. Boniface.

Government the invitation of the Canadian government to send delegates to Ottawa.

The country had become quiet again. On the twenty-second of March the Provisional Government sent off its delegates to the Canadian capital.

Each delegate received the following letter of credence:

Sir,

The President of the Provisional Government of Assiniboia, in Council, by these presents authorizes and delegates, you, Mr. .... in company with Messrs. .... to repair to Ottawa, in Canada, and that there you place before the Canadian government the list which contains the conditions and propositions under which the people of Assiniboia would agree to enter into Confederation with the other Provinces of Canada.

Signed, this twenty-second day of March, in the year of our (Lord) eighteen hundred and seventy.

By order.

THOMAS BUNN<sup>1</sup>  
SECRETARY

Seat of the Government  
Winnipeg,  
Assiniboia

On the arrival of our delegates at Ottawa it is known how Schultz, Mair, Lynch and others tried to get the better of them, by raising against them the prejudices of race and religion. Dr. Lynch was proclaimed and put forward as the true delegate of the North-West. But in fact, the execution of Scott, in re-establishing peace, had deprived these men of the support that they had up till then found in our troubles; and it had rendered their influence at Ottawa null.<sup>2</sup> So Dr. Lynch was not acknowledged as delegate of the North-West. Then to compensate themselves for the ruin of their plans, our enemies sought to make the execution of Scott fatal to us, and to that end they did not cease to put before the eyes of the public horrifying details and unjust motives. They undertook to destroy the moral force of the Provisional Government, by making its members and supporters appear as rebels and usurpers;

<sup>1</sup> Manuscript copies of the originals are in P.A.M., Red River Disturbances.

<sup>2</sup> That is, it had re-established the appearance of unity in the Settlement.

and by representing the death of Scott as simply a detestable murder.<sup>1</sup>

Our delegates were humiliatingly arrested and dragged before the courts. The promise that the Canadian Commissioners had given to us from their government of a fair reception for them was trampled under foot.<sup>2</sup> The Provisional Government and its delegates made their just protests heard.<sup>3</sup>

England made known to the Canadian government the displeasure that the arrest of our delegates had caused her.

On the other hand, His Grace Monsignor Taché spared no effort, no tribulation to make known to all the benevolent intentions of the Crown with respect to the residents of the North-West.<sup>4</sup>

During all our troubles, we had always been borne up by the hope that if our modest claims reached the throne of Her Majesty, She would not leave us to be crushed. Accordingly we unfurled with confidence above our heads the British flag. The liberal attitude which England in fact took towards us and the weighty re-assurances which our Archbishop gave us on the subject of the arrangements we might make with Canada, induced us, notwithstanding the outrage done to our delegates, not to change our inclination to treat with the Canadian government.

Meanwhile, the Provisional Government had obtained the advantage of being recognized in the whole of Rupert's Land and the North-West by the Hudson's Bay Company itself.<sup>5</sup>

On arriving at Ottawa, our delegates, in spite of the humiliation they had sustained, had written as follows to the Secretary of State for the Provinces, the Honourable Jos. Howe.

Ottawa, 23rd April, 1870

To the Honourable Secretary of State, etc.,  
Joseph Howe

Sir,

The undersigned, delegates of the North-West, wishing to delay as little as possible the business of their mission, have the honour to request

<sup>1</sup> See No. XXII above.

<sup>2</sup> The arrest was carried out by officers of the province of Ontario, not by those of Canada.

<sup>3</sup> Page 25 in the original ends here. To judge by the copy in *Le Métis* of February 28, 1874, nothing is missing from the text.

<sup>4</sup> Riel is quite warranted in making this statement: P.A.C., G. 21, Granville to Young, May 18, 1870.

<sup>5</sup> See Introduction, pp. 123-124, and Begg's *Journal*, April 7, 1870.



you to be so good as to inform the government of His Excellency that they desire to be heard as soon as possible.

ALFRED H. SCOTT

JOHN BLACK

J. N. RITCHOT<sup>1</sup>

On April 26, the Honourable Joseph Howe, Secretary of State, etc., replied to our delegates in the following manner:

Ottawa, 26th April, 1870

Gentlemen,

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd instant, stating that as delegates of the North-West to the government of the Dominion of Canada, you wish an audience as soon as possible with the government; and in reply I have the honour to inform you that the Honourable Sir John A. Macdonald and the Honourable Sir Georges Etienne Cartier have been authorized by the government to discuss with you the subject of your mission, and they will be ready to receive you at 11 o'clock.

I have the honour to be

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

JOSEPH HOWE

To Reverend J. N. Ritchot,

John Black, Esq.,

A. H. Scott, Esq.<sup>2</sup>

The negotiations opened at the hour appointed between the delegates of the Canadian government and those of the Provisional Government.

The first condition of the treaty put forward by the delegates of the North-West had been that "after the arrangements a general amnesty would of necessity be proclaimed in the North-West, before Canada took possession of those territories.["]"<sup>3</sup> I do not know whether Canada has ever seriously thought that that condition of the amnesty had been put

<sup>1</sup> A.A.S.B., Scott, Black and Ritchot to Howe, April 22 [*sic*], 1870 (three distinct copies).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, Howe to delegates, April 26, 1870 (two copies).

<sup>3</sup> A reference to Article 19 of the third and fourth "Lists of Rights". The article was not so explicit. See No. XXIII.

by our delegates to the Canadian government as a condition *sine qua non*.<sup>1</sup> It is true that our devotion to the Confederation itself has released it from the need to pay attention to that fact. But I may be permitted to remark, that justice demands that Canada consider it.

I have said that the delegates of the Canadian government accepted the condition of the amnesty. In fact, Sir John A. and Sir Georges Etienne replied to our delegates that it was of the very nature of the friendly settlement which had taken place between the two countries, that that general amnesty should be proclaimed as they were asking. They added that although the proclamation of that amnesty was a matter of the Royal Prerogative, they were, however, in a position to assure the delegates of the North-West that that amnesty would be proclaimed without fail.<sup>2</sup>

The Most Honourable Sir John Young, now Lord Lisgar, [and] Sir Clinton Murdoch,<sup>3</sup> delegated by the Crown to make known at Ottawa its wishes on the subject of the difficulties in the North-West, also gave our delegates the flat assurance that that amnesty would be proclaimed to the satisfaction of the residents of the North-West.

None the less our delegates remarked to His Excellency that they would be happy to have in writing the promise of an amnesty. His Excellency replied that there would be no difficulty about the matter, and that it would be done as soon as Parliament had confirmed the rest of the arrangements.

The delegates of the Canadian government and of the Provisional Government put together the Manitoba Bill.

During that time, the Imperial Government judged it proper to send some regular soldiers into its North-West Territories. It was its right and its duty. And we were glad to see arrive at last the troops of the

<sup>1</sup> It was in fact not so made in the "List of Rights" and the instructions to the delegates; see Introduction, n. 4, p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> It seems evident that Macdonald and Cartier did not say anything so definite. But the latter does seem to have allowed the impression Riel received to have formed in Ritchot's mind. What Cartier had in mind was probably a limited amnesty made acceptable to Ontario by the flight of Riel from the country. See *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, p. 129, evidence of the Honourable Joseph Royal of a conversation with Cartier in July or August, 1870.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Clinton Murdoch, head of the Bureau of Emigration of the Colonial Office, was on a mission to New York and Ottawa. He was ordered by the Colonial Office to observe the Red River negotiations. He had been in Canada before as Private Secretary to Lord Sydenham.

Mother-country to assure the functioning of government amongst us.

But what was our surprise to see Canada assume the right also to send us a military expedition, during the difficulties they were having with us, and without having reached any settlement with us.

The President of the Provisional Government complained to His Grace Monsignor Taché, of the injustice of the conduct and the pretensions of Canada with respect to us. And he declared to His Grace that to the extent that the Wolseley expedition was Canadian, it would see our country present a firm front to it, so long as a friendly understanding had not been definitely concluded between the Canadian government and the Provisional Government, and while we had not got guarantees of a general amnesty.

His Grace condemned that attitude on our part with all his authority. But on our remarking to His Grace that we should be justified in defending ourselves, he, invoking his powers as a Canadian Commissioner, said to us: Do not do that. I give you my word of honour that a general amnesty will be proclaimed before the installation of any Canadian Lieutenant-Governor here.<sup>1</sup>

Besides, the Imperial Government had enjoined upon Canada not to despatch any of its militia to the North-West before the delegates of this country were satisfied.<sup>2</sup>

The Houses of Parliament at Ottawa, having passed the Manitoba Act, our delegates then made insistent representation to the government of Canada to obtain in writing the understanding already reached on the subject of the amnesty. His Excellency the Governor-General replied that he did not believe that there was anything in the world more sure than the pledged word of a representative of Her Majesty. That word he himself had given in favour of the amnesty to the effect that the residents of the North-West would have that amnesty and that it would be delivered in the North-West before the delegates themselves.<sup>3</sup>

Our delegates returned to Fort Garry on the 17th of June,

<sup>1</sup> What actually happened was that Taché, to preserve the peace, promised an amnesty which he failed to obtain before the Wolseley expedition reached Red River. See No. xxviii below.

<sup>2</sup> Permission was not given by the Imperial Government for the despatch of the Red River Expedition until the delegates of the North-West had accepted the Manitoba Bill.

<sup>3</sup> Ritchot was undoubtedly led to believe this. The basis for it is unknown.

1870.<sup>1</sup> On the 24th of the same month, the Provisional Government summoned the assembly of the representatives of the people, to render account in a public session, of the arrangements made with Canada by our delegates.

The treaty was made up of two quite distinct parts: (1) of a political constitution of a considerable part of the North-West Territories, as an independent Province in Confederation: this was the Manitoba Act itself: (2) of a definite settlement of all past difficulties by the proclamation in the very near future of a general amnesty, which had been guaranteed to our delegates as I have just revealed.

We had made such favourable arrangements with the Canadian government that the assembly of the representatives of the North-West voted with no opposition to enter into the Confederation, and the Provisional Government by its Secretary of State, Thomas Bunn, notified of that fact the Honourable Joseph Howe, Secretary of State for the Province.<sup>2</sup> The document indicated that we consented to confederate ourselves with Canada because we had in the Manitoba Act the principles for which we had fought and because a general amnesty was to be proclaimed without delay.

His Grace Monsignor Taché carried that important official paper to the authorities at Ottawa.

It is necessary to remark here that already the Governor-General had neglected to fulfil the assurance which he had given to our delegates, that the amnesty would precede their arrival in the North-West.

However, on the 15th of July, 1870, the transfer of Rupert's Land and the North-West Territories to the Canadian Government was carried out.

To round off the arrangements, our delegates had warned the delegates of the Canadian government to advise their government that the members and officers of the Provisional Government wished to be relieved of the responsibility of governing, as soon as the transfer had been effected. But thereupon the Honourable Minister of Militia and Defence, Sir Georges Etienne Cartier, had been insistent to the delegates in saying:

<sup>1</sup> That is, Ritchot did. Judge Black went on to England, and Alfred Scott, in order to visit his father, went to New York (P.H.S., Cooke Papers, Wheelock to Cooke, May 24, 1870), and did not reach Red River until July 8, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> A mutilated copy of this document is in P.A.M., Red River Disturbances. A copy, or the original, is in the United Kingdom Public Record Office, C.O./687, and is quoted in G. F. G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada* (Toronto, 1936), p. 124.



Let Riel and his Council continue to keep the peace, after the transfer in Manitoba and the North-West, until the arrival of the Lieutenant-Governor.<sup>1</sup> We devoted ourselves to that task. From the 15th of July, 1870, until the 24th of the month of August following we governed, in the interest of Canada, its Province of Manitoba and its territories of the North-West. That period of time having passed, Colonel Wolseley reached Fort Garry. Instead of presenting himself in friendly fashion, as the law of nations made it his duty, his arrival was that of an enemy. The Vice-President of the Provisional Government, Mr. F. X. Dauphinais, and Messrs. F. X. Pagée and Pierre Poitras, two of the people's representatives, who on the 24th of the preceding June had voted in all friendship in favour of our entry into the Confederation, were peacefully following the road which led to their homes.<sup>2</sup> Wolseley had them arrested violently and dragged away to prison. One of them, P. Poitras, an old man, was ill-treated by Colonel Wolseley's soldiers to the extent of suffering serious injury.

After having thus taken possession of Fort Garry, which we had left open to the representatives of Her Majesty, Wolseley, in a public speech, congratulated himself and his troops on having put to flight the bandits of Riel.<sup>3</sup> These were the expressions used to describe the President of the Provisional Government and all its supporters. Some days later the Canadian Lieutenant-Governor arrived. But he assumed the reins of government in our country only to complete the act of arrant perfidy of which Canada had made us the victims. He assumed office without fulfilling the imperative condition of the amnesty.

Thus the Canadian government broke from the beginning the solemn treaty which it had made with the Provisional Government.

Moreover the Canadian government had made some friendly propositions to us through the Vicar-General, Reverend J. B. Thibault, and through Colonel de Salaberry. And when we had accepted its friendship, it laughed at us.

It laughed at its public, formal and unforced pledges of amnesty which

<sup>1</sup> A statement which rests only on Ritchot's assertion in the *Report of Select Committee*, 1874, p. 77. There seems to be no reason to doubt it, but it became in the end a piece of cruel deception. It probably, however, averted a struggle.

<sup>2</sup> This is not reported elsewhere. Wolseley does refer to some individuals fleeing along the Assiniboine from the Fort in buggies as the troops advanced. See No. xxxi below.

<sup>3</sup> Wolseley's proclamation of August 2, 1870.

it had given us, in the month of January, 1870, by the mouth of Mr. D. A. Smith, now superintendent of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company in Manitoba and the North-West.<sup>1</sup>

It also laughed at its word of honour which it had spontaneously given us in favour of an amnesty, in the month of May, 1870, by the mouth of His Grace, the devoted Archbishop of St. Boniface.<sup>2</sup>

The Canadian Confederation is therefore for Manitoba and the North-West a fraud and a deceit.

This state of affairs has existed for three years and a half now. But the old settlers of Rupert's Land and the North-West have never ceased to claim that which belongs to them, what the Canadian government rightly owes them. And to-day more than ever they claim it energetically. What we demand is the amnesty; it is the honest carrying out of the Manitoba Act.<sup>3</sup>

LOUIS RIEL

XXVIII: BISHOP TACHÉ'S REPORT REGARDING AN AMNESTY AND  
THE SECRETARY OF STATE'S REPLY.

[*Reprinted from the Report of the Select Committee on the Causes of the Difficulties in the North-West Territory in 1869-70. (Ottawa, 1874), pp. 32-33.*]

St. Boniface,  
Red River Settlement,  
June 9th, 1870

Hon. Joseph Howe,  
Secretary of State for the Provinces,  
Ottawa, Canada

Honorable Sir,—I hasten to communicate to you, for the information of His Excellency in Council, a very important promise I have just made

<sup>1</sup> See Introduction, p. 92. An amnesty proclaimed then would have been conditional on the dispersion of those assembled in arms.

<sup>2</sup> This is a very telling point. Even if Taché exceeded his authority, which is doubtful, it would have been expedient to support him, had the anger aroused by the execution of Scott not made it impossible for the Conservative government to advise that a general amnesty be granted. Only a Liberal government, strong in Ontario, could even be associated with such an undertaking.

<sup>3</sup> The copy of *Le Métis* of February 28, 1874, ends with this line: "Rien de plus, mais aussi rien de moins." [Nothing more, but also nothing less.]

in the name of the Canadian Government.<sup>1</sup> I feel all the responsibility I have incurred in taking such a step, while on another hand I am confident that His Excellency the Governor General and his Privy Council will not judge with too much severity an act accomplished in order to avoid great misfortunes and secure the welfare of the country.

In my last despatch, dated the 28th May, I mentioned the satisfaction caused by the Liberal Bill erecting the Province of Manitoba. I also stated the uneasiness occasioned by the ignorance whether or not a general and complete amnesty had been granted. The two last mails having brought no information on this subject, that feeling of uneasiness has increased to such a degree that it gives apprehension about the maintenance of peace in the country.

Some speak of raising a large force to meet and molest the coming troops at some difficult point on their way hither; and other plans, perhaps still more dangerous, are also afloat.

Fortunately the Provisional Government has so far refused such resources, determined to await the arrival of the delegates. Owing to the good disposition of the Provisional Government, and in order to remove the dangers to which we are exposed, and which it would be too tedious to enumerate, I solemnly gave my word of honor, and promised even in the name of the Canadian Government that the troops are sent on a mission of peace; that all the irregularities of the past will be totally overlooked or forgiven; that nobody will be annoyed for having been either leader or member of the Provisional Government, or for having acted under its guidance. In a word, that a complete and entire amnesty (if not already bestowed) will surely be granted before the arrival of the troops, so that every one may remain quiet, and induce others to do the same.

Personally I felt no hesitation in giving such an assurance, because what I heard myself from the different members of the Cabinet at Ottawa, and what has been said by them in Parliament, has entirely convinced me that this promise of mine had been already issued, and that the delegates now on their way back will convey the most satisfactory information on that subject.

Should my views, unfortunately, have deviated from the real tendency of the Government, I humbly beg that my promise will be considered as sacred.

<sup>1</sup> This letter may be compared with the account given by Riel in his "Historical Memoir", No. xxvii above, of his threat to resist the expeditionary force.

It is the privilege of His Excellency to forgive, and if forgiveness be considered necessary, I earnestly pray for it.

I dare flatter myself with the idea that I have done something in favour of the Canadian cause in this country; and I can assure the Government of my willingness to contribute, as far as in my power, to its prosperity; but, should I have promised in vain, besides the heartrending feeling I would personally experience, I would be publicly reputed a deceiver, or as having been wilfully deceived by the Canadian Government. An awful re-action would ensue, and who knows what would be the result.

If necessary, I therefore humbly lay my request before His Excellency. It would be very easy to have it largely subscribed to by my respectable names, but such an undertaking would have given rise to excitement, and it is my constant endeavor to quell such a feeling rather than nourish it, as it is the greatest danger to be apprehended.

I am confident that although this is a personal act, it will be considered as the wish of the community at large and favorably granted.

It is rumored that Dr. Schultz is coming with a large party of supporters. I am sure that if such be the case the Government has taken the necessary steps to prevent the coalition [collision?] which would be the consequence of his return perhaps with a desire to revenge the past, and renew the cause of by-gone troubles.

We are perfectly aware of his former conduct, and it is not difficult to foresee what he [it?] may be in future, if not checked by proper authority.

I easily understand that at a distance my ideas may appear rather pressing, but allow me to say that here on the spot we are in a measure [able?] to ascertain the dangers and difficulties which may naturally seem chimerical when viewed from abroad.

Experience has already proved that, unfortunately, our apprehensions are not always entirely groundless nor an effort of our imagination. So far it is universally considered as a wonder that nothing worse has happened.<sup>1</sup> May the wisdom and liberality of the Government remove what seems to be the last difficulty.

I consider this document of such importance that I am forwarding it by a special messenger to Pembina to secure its prompt delivery into

<sup>1</sup> It is to be presumed that this is an oblique reference to the shooting of Thomas Scott. Taché was undoubtedly aware of the outcry this event had caused in Ontario; and it is not likely that he was ignorant of the silent indignation it had aroused amongst the English of Red River. Hence the unspoken query of this letter is, can the Canadian Government grant an amnesty covering the death of Scott?



your hands. No doubt you will be kind enough to answer me by the first mail.

I remain, with much respect, honorable sir,

Your humble servant,

[Signed] — ALEX.

HENDERSON, Sec. Registrar.

Ottawa, 4th July, 1885.

My Lord, Your letter of the 9th of June, which reached me yesterday, has been laid before the Privy Council, and has received their consideration.

Your Lordship states that personally you felt no hesitation in giving, in the name of the Canadian Government, an assurance of a complete amnesty.

Your Lordship has no doubt read the debate and explanations which took place in Parliament during the discussion of the Manitoba Bill. The question of amnesty was brought forward, and the answers and explanations given by the Ministers in the House of Commons were that the Canadian Government had no power to grant such an amnesty, and that the exercise of the prerogative of mercy rested solely with Her Majesty the Queen.

The Rev. Father Ritchot and Mr. Scott must, on their arrival, have informed your Lordship that, in the repeated interviews which they had with Sir John A. Macdonald and Sir George E. Cartier, they were distinctly informed that the Government of the Dominion had no power as a Government to grant an amnesty; and I would add that this Government is not in a position to interfere with the free action of Her Majesty in the exercise of the Royal clemency.

Her Majesty's Imperial Ministers can alone advise the Queen on such an important matter, when called upon to do so. No doubt can be entertained that Her Majesty, advised by Her Ministers, will on a calm review of all the circumstances discharge the duty of this high responsibility in a temperate and judicial spirit.

The foregoing explanations are given to Your Lordship in order that it may be well understood that the responsibility of the assurance given by Your Lordship of a complete amnesty, cannot in any way attach itself to the Canadian Government.

The conversation to which Your Lordship alludes as having taken place between Your Lordship and some Members of the Canadian

Cabinet, when Your Lordship was in Ottawa about the middle of the month of February last, must necessarily have taken place with reference to the proclamation issued by His Excellency, the Governor General, on the 6th December last, by command of Her Majesty, in which His Excellency announced that in case of their immediate and peaceable dispersion, he would order that no legal proceedings be taken against any parties implicated in these unfortunate breaches of the law at Red River.

Though I have felt it my duty to be thus explicit in dealing with the principal subject of your letter, I trust I need not assure you that your zealous and valuable exertions to calm the public mind in the North-West are duly appreciated here, and I am confident that when you regard the obstructions which have been interposed to the adoption of a liberal and enlightened policy for Manitoba, you will not be disposed to relax your exertions until that policy is formally established.

I have, &c.,

[Signed] JOSEPH HOWE

Right Reverend,  
The Bishop of St. Boniface,  
Red River

XXIX: MEMORANDUM ON A GENERAL AMNESTY, PREPARED BY  
THE HONOURABLE SIR GEORGE ETIENNE CARTIER FOR THE  
GOVERNOR-GENERAL, JULY 26, 1870.

[Reproduced from official copy in P.A.C., G. 18/25].

*Confidential*

The undersigned has the honour to submit for Your Excellency's consideration, under the seal of Confidence, the following observations on the Confidential despatch of the Rt. Honble the late Secretary of State for the Colonies—Earl Granville, of the 30th June 1870 suggesting that the opinion of the Canadian Cabinet should be obtained on the question of granting a general amnesty to such of the Inhabitants of the Red River Settlement as may have participated in the late political disturbances in that part of Her Majesty's Dominions.

The undersigned takes this opportunity again to refer your Excellency to the debate & explanations which took place in Parliament during the discussion on the Manitoba Bill.

The question of amnesty was then brought up & the answer & explanations given by the Ministers in the House of Commons were that the Canadian Govt. had no power to grant such an amnesty and that the exercise of the prerogative of mercy rested solely with H.M. the Queen.

During the negotiations which took place between Sir John Macdonald & the undersigned on behalf of the Canadian Govt. and Judge Black, Father Ritchot & Mr. Scott, Delegates from the Inhabitants of Red River Settlement, the question of a general amnesty was brought forward as a part of the Extended Bill of Rights<sup>1</sup> forming the basis of their negotiations, and proposed as a necessary and preliminary step towards their assenting, on behalf of its inhabitants, to the adoption of a political system for the Govt. of that Territory.

The reply made by Sir John A. Macdonald & the undersigned to this proposition was to the effect that the Canadian Govt. could not advise upon or in any way deal with that question, in as much as the Acts & offences intended to be covered by it had taken place during a period of time when the Canadian Govt. had no authority over that Territory, and because H.M. the Queen had at the outset and irrespective of the Canadian Govt. taken up the question of amnesty as shown by Your Excellency's Proclamation of the 6th December last in which Your Excellency, by direct Command of the Queen announced in the name and on behalf of Her Majesty that in case of their immediate and peaceable dispersion she would order that no legal proceedings be taken against any parties implicated in the unfortunate breaches of the law at Red River. In fact it was intimated to the Delegates by Sir John A. Macdonald and the undersigned that the Inhabitants of Red River Settlement must necessarily look to Her Majesty the Queen, solely and directly, for the exercise of the Royal clemency in favour of the participators in the disturbances referred to, and must trust to the merciful disposition ever evinced by Her Majesty in all cases in which she felt warranted in exercising her prerogative of pardon.

It was further intimated to the Delegates that the claim preferred by them in that respect would, irrespective of the reasons above given, be more certain of a favourable reception from the fact that according to their own pretensions the opposition raised in the settlement was directed rather against the Canadian than the Imperial authorities, and that consequently Her Majesty would be in a better and more favourable

<sup>1</sup> This shows that Cartier was aware of the differences between the second, and the third and fourth "Lists of Rights".

position to consider their alleged grievances and their prayer for a general amnesty.

The Delegates relied upon these explanations and forthwith entered upon the negotiations which resulted in the passing of the Act relating to the Government of the Province of Manitoba. Without these explanations it is more than probable they would not have felt themselves justified in negotiating.

When the Govt. during the debate on the Manitoba Act in the House of Commons was questioned with regard to a general amnesty, they declared that the matter belonged exclusively to the jurisdiction of Her Majesty and could not be dealt with nor advised upon by Her Canadian Ministers.

In consequence of these explanations Father Ritchot brought the matter personally under Your Excellency's notice and subsequently submitted to Your Excellency a Petition addressed to Her Majesty and signed by him on behalf of himself and his co-delegates praying for the exercise by Her Majesty of Her Prerogative of Mercy in favour of those who had been participants in the disturbances in the Red River Country.

It may be proper here to remind Your Excellency of the Instructions given to you by Her Majesty's Govt. to receive the Red River Delegates and listen to the grievances of the Inhabitants, irrespective of any opposition that might be raised in any quarter in the Dominion of Canada, also, to recall your Excellency's attention to the 3rd paragraph of the Conf. Telegram from Lord Granville to Your Excellency of the 23rd of April last, which is in the following words. "Canadian Govt. to accept decision of H.M.'s Govt on disputed points of Settlers Bill of rights".

As stated above the Delegates brought up, as an extension of the so called settlers' Bill of Rights, the question of Amnesty.

Irrespective of the reasons given above for leaving the question of amnesty to be dealt with by the Imperial authorities without the advice or interference of the Canadian Govt. Your Excellency knows as a fact that it would have been impossible for this administration to agree among themselves on that question, and it was within the spirit and purport of that paragraph to reserve the question for the decision of Her Majesty, advised by Her Imperial Ministers inasmuch as no decision could have been otherwise arrived at.

It may moreover be observed that had the views of the Delegates with regard to the question of amnesty as a preliminary step towards negotiation, been at all entertained it would have been manifestly impossible to arrive



at any conclusion with them and the passing of the Manitoba Act would have been an impossibility.

If Your Excellency were to refer that question for the consideration of Your Council the answer would necessarily be that it was not one for the action or advice of the Canadian Govt. but for that of Her Majesty in Her Imperial Council, and further, that in view of the explanations offered by Your Ministers in the House of Commons, Parliament and the Country expect a solution of that question directly by Her Majesty advised by Her Imperial Ministers.

Already the Members of the Privy Council in a communication addressed to Bishop Taché on the 4th July instant by the Secretary of State for the Provinces, Mr Howe, written in answer to one from His Lordship of the 8th June preceeding,<sup>1</sup> have informed His Lordship that the question of amnesty is one depending exclusively upon the exercise of Her Majesty's prerogative under the advice of Her Imperial Ministers the matter having been fully considered by the Council before that communication was transmitted.

The undersigned understands that a copy of Bishop Taché's letter and of the answer thereto have already been forwarded by Your Excellency for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The undersigned is in a position to state from a Telegram received from the Honble Sir John A. Macdonald now in Prince Edward Island on the 18th July Inst. respecting the question of the Red River Amnesty that he, Sir John A. Macdonald is of opinion that the decision of "that question should proceed from England without advice from Canada".

Notwithstanding the transfer to Canada of the North West Territories on the 15th July Inst. that transfer cannot alter the legal aspect of the question as regards offences committed by the people of that Territory anterior to that date, the pardoning of which offences resting now as well as then properly with Her Majesty under the advice of the Imperial Ministers.

As regards the merits of the question of amnesty the undersigned persists in the views which he has already individually expressed to Your Excellency<sup>2</sup> and in which Sir Francis Hincks<sup>3</sup> has stated his concurrence.

[Signed]

GEO. ET: CARTIER

<sup>1</sup> See No. XXVIII above.

<sup>2</sup> Cartier's views are probably fully expressed in his Memorandum of June 8, 1869, to the Governor-General: *Report of Select Committee, 1874*, pp. 171-178.

<sup>3</sup> Sir Francis Hincks, 1807-1885; in 1870 Minister of Finance.

## 558 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

XXX: BISHOP MACHRAY TO SIR JOHN YOUNG: A SECOND LETTER  
ON CONDITIONS IN RED RIVER.

*[Reproduced from Public Record Office, C.O. 537/101].<sup>1</sup>*

Bishop's Court  
Red River Settlement  
July 16th, 1870

Sir :

I suppose Mr. Smith kindly conveyed to your Excellency my letter of March 17th in wh. I ventured, with a freedom wh. under the circumstances was I trust not considered improper, to place before Your Excellency my views upon our troubles here.

After much hesitation I think it desirable for me to communicate again with Your Excellency for the information, if you think proper, of the Government and I hope Y.E. will excuse my thus troubling yourself directly instead of addressing the proper minister as it is only a feeling of urgency that leads me to intrude myself in this way in political matters and I do this presuming that a letter to Y.E. need not be included among official communications. I shd. also wish my former letter to be considered private.

My object in now writing to Y.E. is to say that from the extraordinary delay in the advance of the troops we are rapidly getting into a very dangerous condition of things here. I sometimes regret that I did not go myself to Canada but there was a feeling against my leaving the Country among those I had to consult—Besides Mr. Smith & Judge Black were so competent to place before the government the real state of affairs that I can hardly suppose any further representation from me wd. have been of much service—But it seems to me that the Govt. of Engd. & Canada are still acting in great ignorance—they seem to be playing with the Provisional Govt. wh. is a perfect abomination to the majority of people here—waiting for its acceptance of their terms, & delaying the troops for that purpose, as if they were dealing with a real power.—Many of the people are getting maddened at this—meantime the Provisional Govt. never of any account beyond the sentiment excepting as it might have

<sup>1</sup> A copy of this letter was forwarded by the Governor-General to the Colonial Secretary on August 9, 1870, with the following comment : " It gives a very different version of the state of affairs and feeling at the Red River from that which has been furnished to us from other quarters and shews how necessary it was that the Expedition should be sent in the interests of peace and good order."

dealt with Fenians is getting very weak here.—Many of the French have left and are leaving while the Indians all most hostile—desperately hostile to the French—are coming in daily to the lower part of the settlement—the part where the people rose last winter in a body.

I assure Y.E. that but for the earnest interference of myself and others there wd. have been a frightful catastrophe last winter. It is the opinion of my Clergy below that it only requires a spark—some accidental circumstance to bring on a catastrophe now. The action of the Govt. of Canada has helped this on. The Indians have come in under the expectation of finding the troops here. I understand there are now about 700 Indians in the Lower Settlement encamped mainly men—the mere feeding of this idle body is a calamity sufficient to create trouble—Now I think the Govt. of Canada should have known the facts I am to mention sufficiently to have hurried on the troops &c hastened the transfer without delay.—

1 That a considerable majority of the people including almost all of intelligence and substance are against the Prov. Govt.

2 That the presence of the Eng. representatives exclusive of two added by Riel contrary to the stipulation with the English<sup>1</sup> was solely to save the lives of prisoners and to prevent a desolating war in the little settlement.

3 That all the Indians near the settlement and on to Fort William are deady opposed to the Provisional govt.—

4 That no opposition was likely to be offered to an Expedition as an opposing party would have had to enter a hostile Indian country.—But apparently the Provisional Govt. is treated as representing the people here. This is very galling to many! Not a man of the English section is in arms with the French. But the Provs. govt. is going on without cessation in its demands on the Company—They have finished the £3,000 given by Mr. McTavish—They have now demanded and are getting the £2000 promised in case of difficulty with Canada. This is one consequence of the delay. They are now securing the £4,000 worth of Provisions &c. promised to be left in their hands.<sup>2</sup> All this is being doled out to the French—or it has been. They have been getting money—foods—wheat. The Eng. Half-breeds and Indians, keeping entirely aloof—the Priests going constantly with the French, apparently approving—if not participating—The English section and a great many of the better

<sup>1</sup> That is, the representatives of Winnipeg ; see Begg's *Journal* for March 5, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> See Introduction, pp. 123-124.



French look on all this as nothing but robbery. Is it any wonder that the feeling on the subject is profoundly bitter at all the delay?

I really, Y.E., feel surprise that there seems such a want of comprehension of the terrible danger of allowing such wholesale plunder, for it is universally felt as this, to be going on in the face of the Indian Population of this region. Demands have been made at several of the Interior Forts—what Police could keep this Country if the people get utterly demoralized. The greatest insubordination has shown itself in the boats going this year in the Company's service—with the greatest dishonesty the crews of many of the boats have returned after having had their wages in advance to the most serious loss of the Company and to the gravest inconvenience and risk of the far interior.

I would beg then that the troops be hastened on without delay. If we had only the Battery of Artillery and the regular Infantry we should be safer. But I really suppose it is unnecessary to say this—as by the time this letter reaches Y.E. surely orders have been given to hasten forward with all speed. It is likely we may try to meet with them and urge them on. I would further express the hope that Col. Wolseley has orders to take the charge of the Govt. here on his arrival. Mr. Archibald will not come here but to receive the charge from the hands of Col. Wolseley. So far then I would say let the govt. consider—the precariousness of affairs here—the fearful risk in delaying the troops—the having to carry on the govt. in a settlement with a decided majority of the people discontented with the past & in danger of being led into a vindictive course in the future. And now I would as I am writing, refer to a few other matters—There is much feeling here on the subject of an Amnesty or Bill of Indemnity—But for the deliberate murder of Scott it wd. doubtless be better in view of the future to ignore the past to a great extent if the sufferers could be compensated and property seized upon restored. But Scott's death was a most wanton act and a direct breach of the solemn promise to Mr. Smith and Archdeacon McLean on wh. with my help they secured the election of Eng. representatives. I do not suppose that there is a desire for the forfeiture of life after this lapse of time but the body of the people here will feel deeply if there be no indication of the law that has been outraged—Then what of the property said to be confiscated? Horses, guns, property of all kinds of individuals are in the hands of others by seizure, division of spoils, and sale,—all this property must go back to the lawful owners but what of the property that cannot be restored.



Then how is the Queen's Govt. to be carried on in the new Province! I fear it is a great mistake having a responsible Ministry at present—For at least a few years the govt. should have been conducted by 3 or 4 competent officials able to speak with ease having ex officio seats in a Representative Assembly. The material for a Ministry scarcely exists at present and I think in view of the bitterness of feeling at present the necessity of having one is much to be regretted.

Then the grant of 1,400,000 acres to the half breed part of the community is a most dangerous provision<sup>1</sup>—This will have to be wisely—most wisely administered. If not I am sure that before many years there will be a revolution upsetting the whole arrangement. A far better course for the half-breeds—a regard for whom I consider most right—would have been to have enacted a free grant of 200 acres for any new settler but say 300 for a half breed—Any attempt to limit a special tract of country to a special class of the people and religion—leading to land not being improved and occupied—is greatly to be deprecated in the general interests of the community and of the religious body itself—for I am sure [such] an arrangement will not in the end be suffered to stand and it will create endless agitation and annoyance.

I have only further to say that I do not think it will be possible to pay on goods imported to this country the Canadian duty of 15 per cent and upwards till there is safe and cheap communication directly with Fort William.

The first consequence would be the sending of all our merchants to deal with Canadian wholesale merchants thus destroying the American trade—The second consequence would be the termination by the American Govt. of the privilege of bonding goods in transit through the U.S.—

The third consequence would be either the getting of goods from the U.S. paying on them both the American and Canadian duties wh. with carriage would be simply ruinous to the country or getting Canadian goods over an expensive and awkward route so it will be necessary to hasten on steam navigation from Fort William so as to have it completed with this [place] before the end of the next three years or nearly so.

Perhaps Y.E's Secretary would ackge the rect. of this letter.

I am sir

[Signed] R. RUPERT'S LAND

The Rt. Honble. Sir J. Young  
Govr. Genl. of Canada—

<sup>1</sup> A reference to section 31 of the Manitoba Act.

## 562 BEGG'S JOURNAL AND OTHER PAPERS

XXXI: PART OF A NARRATIVE BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL G. J. WOLSELEY<sup>1</sup> OF THE CAPTURE OF FORT GARRY.

[Reprinted from *Blackwood's Magazine* CIX, *January-June*, 1871, pp. 169-181].

\* \* \*

The wind being against us, we had to halt for the night at a point six miles by road from Fort Garry. Our bivouac was carefully watched by a cordon of sentries on both banks of the river, and trustworthy men were sent forward into the village near the Fort to gain information, and meet us in the early morning, as it was intended to march upon the Fort at daybreak. The "shave" that night was, that we should have a fight; and it was well that we had something to cheer us, for a more dreary attempt at repose it is impossible to imagine. It began to pour with rain soon after nightfall, and continued without cessation until morning. To march upon Fort Garry was out of the question, or at least it would have been folly to have attempted it, when we had the means of going there by water, as the face of the country was changed into a sea of mud. Roads there are none on these prairies in the ordinary acceptance of the term. Places between which there is any traffic are joined by cart-tracks, for which a width of about eighty yards is allowed when they pass through a farm; so that when one spot becomes cut up, the traveller can have a wide margin to select his way from upon each side of the old path.

This necessary change of plan was annoying, as we had looked forward to advancing upon the Fort in all the pride, pomp and circumstance of war.

As we bent over our fires at daybreak, trying to get some warmth for our bodies, and sufficient heat to boil the kettles, a more miserable-looking lot of objects it would be impossible to imagine. Every one was wet through; we were cold and hungry; our very enemies would have pitied our plight. A hurried breakfast of tea and biscuit was soon over, and we were again in the boats by 6 A.M., rowing in three columns towards Fort Garry, as upon the preceding day. It poured heavily, and the country was at places a sheet of water, through which our skirmishers on the banks had to wade as best they could. As we approached the Protestant cathedral, the union-jack was run up to the steeple, and its bells rang out

<sup>1</sup> Colonel Garnett Joseph Wolseley (1833-1913), created C.B. and K.C.M.G. for his services in the Red River Expedition; later he became Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Army, and was created Viscount Wolseley.

a musical welcome to the expeditionary force. The left bank was neatly cultivated and well settled, the population being entirely of English and Scotch descent. The other bank was a tangled mass of poor timber, and an underbrush consisting of hazel and rose bushes, intertwined with Virginia creeper. The moderately-rapid current in the river has, in the course of ages, cut out for itself a canal-like channel, which averaged from 150 to 300 yards in width. The floods in spring, when the ice breaks up, have in the last twenty years doubled in some places the distance between the banks, which are of most tenacious clay, steep throughout, and generally about thirty feet high. We landed at a place called Point Douglas on the left bank, where the river makes a great bend to the eastward ; so that, although it is only about two miles by road to the Fort, it is about six there by river. Our skirmishers had collected a few carts and horses, sufficient for the conveyance of some tools, ammunition, &c. &c. The guns were fastened by their trails to the rear of carts, and dragged along in that manner. Messengers who had been sent on the previous evening to the village of Winnipeg joined us here with information that Riel and his gang were still in the Fort, and that the current rumour was that he intended to fight. He had distributed additional ammunition amongst his men, and the gates were closed and the guns loaded.<sup>1</sup>

The men were quickly ashore, and advanced towards the Fort under cover of a line of skirmishers. It was heavy work marching through the deep mud with a driving rain beating in our faces, making it very difficult to see more than a few hundred yards before us. Notwithstanding all these drawbacks, the men's pace was most elastic, and they were in the highest spirits at the prospect of a fight, which all the inhabitants we encountered now assured us we were certain of having. The village of Winnipeg is a small collection of houses, chiefly of wood, situated about 800 yards north of the Fort, with which a straight road connects it. The Fort is in the right angle formed by the junction of the Assinaboine with the Red River, being north of the former, and west of the latter stream. It was known that there was a boat-bridge over the Assinaboine, immediately opposite the southern gate of the Fort. It was therefore desirable to draw our line of attack round it so as to command the two rivers, and so getting the enemy into the corner formed by them, prevent his escape.

Instead, therefore, of passing directly through the village, we swept

<sup>1</sup> No resistance had been planned and no preparations had been made.



round to the west, leaving it on our left ; and when clear of it, swung round our right with the intention of taking up a position commanding the bridge. The people in the village assured us that Riel was in the Fort, and intended to resist. Several were asked to go forward in advance of our skirmishers, to ascertain if the southern gate was closed and the walls manned ; but all feared to do so. As we passed the village we could see the guns in the embrasures bearing in our direction. Some people in buggies were descried going off from the Fort westerly, but were brought to a halt by our skirmishers. They proved to be some of Riel's counsellors [sic] ; but nothing could be learned from them. The atmosphere was so thick it was difficult to make out, even with our glasses, whether men were or were not standing to the guns which we saw. We expected every moment to see a puff of smoke from an embrasure, to be followed by the whizz of a round-shot past our heads. Every moment increased the excitement : the skirmishers quickened their pace as they neared the place, as if in dread lest others should enter it before them. Everything remaining silent, some staff officers were sent galloping round to see if the southern gate was open, and what was going on in rear of the Fort. They soon returned, bringing word that it was evacuated, and the gates left open.

This was at first a sad disappointment to the soldiers, who, having gone through so much toil in order to put down the rebellion, longed to be avenged upon its authors. Our victory, although bloodless, was complete. We dragged out some of the rebel guns, and fired a royal salute as the union-jack was run up the flagstaff, from which had floated, for so many months, the rebel banner that had been worked for Riel by the nuns in the convent attached to Bishop Taché's cathedral. The scene inside the Fort was most depressing : the square in front of the principal house was under water, and there was mud and filth everywhere. Riel and some of his friends had remained in the Fort up to the last possible moment, and had only left when they saw our skirmishers. Their breakfast was still on the table ; and their clothes and arms lay scattered about through the numerous houses they had occupied, in a manner denoting the suddenness of their departure.

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XXXII: ABBÉ DUGAS ON THE CAPTURE OF FORT GARRY AND THE FLIGHT OF RIEL, AUGUST 24, 1870.

[*Reprinted from L'histoire véridique, XIII, pp. 191-194.*]<sup>1</sup>

[Translation]

On August 23 Bishop Taché arrived from Ottawa, and went immediately to Fort Garry to assure the Provisional Government that the Wolseley Expedition was altogether one of peace. The evening of the 23rd, Riel came to say to the Bishop of St. Boniface that the troops had reached some point on the lower Red, and that they would be at the Fort the next morning very early. The Bishop would not believe a word of it. It is impossible, he said, that it should be so ; the soldiers will not be here for a fortnight, they assured me of it in Ottawa.

My Lord Bishop, said Riel, you have been deceived from beginning to end, the soldiers are here quite near ; they wish to surprise us and for that purpose all the trails are closed, the scouts sent out from this side are held prisoners.

Everyone was in a flutter at St. Boniface, in Winnipeg, and in the Fort.

Riel, convinced of the great danger which his people ran, sent every one away during the night ; he, however, insisted on remaining in the Fort with O'Donoghue.

On the morning of the 24th, an English settler<sup>2</sup> arrived at full gallop to say to Riel, For the love of God clear out, the troops are only two miles from the city and you are going to be lynched. He had only just time to cross to St. Boniface ; to avoid being pursued closely, he cut the cable which held the ferry boat.

His first words on entering the Bishop's palace were these : " Come and see, Your Grace, the soldiers who approach the Fort. Do you believe it now ? The only thing for me to do is to get on horseback and bolt for the other side of the boundary."

Accompanied by two trusty half-breeds, well armed, he set out by the east bank of the river to reach Pembina, in order to escape the questionings of Wolseley.

On leaving he consoled himself by saying : " No matter what happens now the rights of the half-breeds are assured by the Manitoba Act, that is what I wanted—My mission is finished."

<sup>1</sup> The Abbé Dugas in this extract gives the reverse of the picture given by Wolseley of the happenings of August 24, 1870.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel J. G. Stewart ; see note 1 on p. 479.

Here indeed, ended the mission of Riel in the rising of 1870, and one may say that it was providential.

Without the resistance of the half-breeds to the Canadian government, the rights of minorities would never have been written into the constitution of the country, and perhaps nothing would remain, in the North-West, of the French element.

## APPENDIX

### FRENCH ORIGINALS OF TRANSLATED DOCUMENTS

II : LE NOUVEAU MONDE, 3<sup>e</sup> fevr., 1869.

Nous recevons de la Rivière-Rouge une lettre écrite par un métis qui s'indigne à bon droit des inepties que vient de publier un certain M. Mair dans le *Globe*, de Toronto et la *Gazette* de Montréal.

Déjà nous avons fait connaître la conduite de l'agent du gouvernement canadien, M. Snow, qui profite de la disette des malheureux colons de la Rivière-Rouge pour les faire travailler à vil prix ; on verra aujourd'hui à quelles sources véridiques les journaux ci-dessus nommés puisent leurs renseignements sur la Rivière-Rouge, son climat, ses habitants, la fertilité du sol, le degré de misère qui y règne, etc.

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Rivière-Rouge, 1<sup>er</sup> février 1869

Monsieur le Rédacteur,

Veillez s'il vous plaît me donner une petite place dans les colonnes de votre journal, pour parler moi aussi de la Rivière-Rouge.

Je ne puis résister à cette envie depuis que j'ai lu les ineffabilités que vient d'en dire un journal de Haut-Canada (le *Globe*) en, [*sic*] reproduisant une lettre d'un certain M. Mair, arrivé à la Rivière-Rouge l'automne dernier. Ce monsieur, canadien anglais, est, dit-on, doué du talent de faire des vers ; si c'est le cas je lui conseillerais fort de cultiver ce talent, car par là au moins ses écrits auraient le mérite de la rime puisqu'ils n'ont pas toujours celui du bon sens.

Un mois à peine après son arrivée dans ce pays, M. Mair a voulu en faire le tableau et celui de ses habitants. Il y a réussi à peu près comme ce navigateur qui passant à une lieue des côtes, écrivait sur son journal :

*Les habitants de ce pays nous ont paru assez traitables.*

Le climat de la Rivière-Rouge, dit M. Mair, dans sa lettre, est des plus agréables. Au 19 novembre il n'y a pas trois degrés de froid. Je l'avais bien entendu dire, mais je le connais par expérience maintenant.

Voyez-vous ! s'il fût arrivé ici de nuit, et qu'il eût pu écrire à l'instant ses impressions, il aurait dit de même. "*Ici le soleil ne se lève jamais ; les ténèbres les plus épaisses couvrent toujours ces immenses contrées.*"

C'est à peu près ce qu'il a fait en parlant du climat après quinze jours d'expérience. Il ne sait pas que très souvent les glaces sont prises à la Toussaint ;

que nous avons des tempêtes de neige, même au milieu d'octobre ; que l'année dernière, durant le mois de janvier, le thermomètre a marqué continuellement de 25 à 30 degrés centigrades et que très souvent nous avons des froids de 40 degrés. Cette année, la Providence qui nous avait déjà bien éprouvés, a voulu nous épargner le froid, mais il ne faut pas dire pour cela que nous vivons sous la zone torride.

Le pays, ajoute-t-il, est d'une richesse inconcevable : ceux qui veulent cultiver sont tous riches ; les métis seuls sont dans la misère.

Eh ! bien, je suis métis moi et je dis qu'il n'y a rien de plus faux que ces paroles. Je connais presque tous les noms de ceux qui reçoivent des secours cet hiver, et je puis assurer qu'il y en a de toutes les couleurs. Il y a des métis qui n'implorent pas la charité, comme il y a des anglais, des allemands et des écossais, qui la reçoivent chaque semaine.

Ce n'était donc pas assez pour ces messieurs de venir insulter à la misère de notre pays en faisant travailler à vil prix des malheureux pressés par la faim, il fallait encore semer à l'étranger des mensonges, pour faire croire aux gens que les aumônes envoyées à la R.R. n'étaient pas nécessaires. Heureusement qu'il y a d'autres témoignages plus respectables publiés dans les journaux pour contredire de tels avancés.

“ On peut, dit-il encore, juger de la richesse de certains particuliers par une vente d'animaux à la Compagnie, par un seul habitant. Il a vendu pour £5,000 de bétail.” Holà ! . . .

Savez-vous qu'en les estimant à dix louis par tête, il en faudrait cinq cents, pour arriver à cette somme ? Avançons plus loin, car jamais un particulier à la R.R. n'a eu cinq cents animaux à vendre et pas même cent.

Il ajoute : “ L'avenir du pays est aussi assuré que le lever du soleil demain.”

Voilà ce qui s'appelle tirer des horoscopes. Et qui donc jusqu'à ce jour a pu douter de l'avenir de ce pays ? Oui, à moins que Dieu ne fasse sauter cette petite partie du globe, ce pays comme tous les autres, aura un avenir quelconque, mais pas celui que lui prédit M. Mair.

Je connais des hommes qui ont plus que quinze jours d'expérience et qui disent le contraire de ce monsieur. Il dit enfin : *la ville du Portage de la Prairie est destinée à devenir une des plus importantes du pays : cependant je ne vous en parlerai pas avant de l'avoir vue.*

Eh ! pourquoi pas ? Vous parlez bien d'autres choses que vous n'avez pas eu le temps de voir ni de connaître : ça vaudrait bien autant que le reste de votre lettre : tout autant que les termes peu courtois, et je dirai même peu civilisés, dont vous vous servez en parlant des dames du pays, qui certes sous tous les rapports, valent bien les dames de votre pays.

Soit dit en passant, M. Mair, si nous n'avions que vous pour échantillon des hommes civilisés, nous n'en aurions pas une bien haute idée. Si je voulais m'amuser à tenir la plume comme vous, pour le seul plaisir de dire des sottises au monde j'aurais des choses amusantes à dire sur votre compte. . . .



Dans toute autre circonstance que celle où nous sommes, je n'aurais pas relevé les mensonges de cette lettre. Nous sommes habitués à voir arriver chaque année, de ces étrangers qui viennent nous toiser du haut en bas et qui vont ensuite faire imprimer dans les journaux ou dans de gros livres, leurs réflexions plus ou moins biscornues sur nous et notre pays : mais après le fléau qui nous a frappé, obligés que nous sommes de recourir à la charité publique, j'ai cru qu'il était de mon devoir de protester contre des mensonges qui pourraient en pays étrangers, faire regarder comme inutiles les aumônes envoyées à la Rivière Rouge.

L. R.

IV : L'ABBÉ DUGAS À M<sup>SR</sup>. TACHÉ, 29 AOÛT, 1869

Monseigneur :

La politique devient de plus en plus intéressante à la Riv. Rouge. Je vous ai déjà annoncé l'arrivée de cet arpenteur qui se dit envoyé par le gouvernement pour mesurer les terres : il n'a pas commencé-ci, et je crois qu'il ne commencera pas. Son plan a mis le pays en feu. Lundi dernier il a annoncé qu'il allait commencer ses opérations à la Pointe de Chêne au lieu de commencer au Fort Garry comme il l'avait dit tout d'abord. Aussitôt que la nouvelle a été connue les gens de la Pointe de Chêne [sont] tous venus l'avertir de ne pas mettre le pied de ce côté-là s'il tenait à garder sa tête sur ses épaules. Ils étaient déjà intrigués d'avance par une bande de ceux que Snow a fait venir du Canada pour travailler au chemin, et qui depuis quelques jours semblaient plutôt occupés à se choisir des terres qu'à travailler au chemin. Dans le cours de la semaine il vient de recevoir plusieurs autres lettres des différentes parties de la colonie, lui faisant les mêmes défenses. Les Anglais du bas de la Riv. sont encore plus excités que les Métis, et veulent, nous dit-on, chasser cet arpenteur ainsi Schultz qui est l'âme de toute la société.

Tout cela devient très sérieux. Un rien peut aujourd'hui faire éclater des troubles, qui auront les plus funestes conséquences. Le gouvernement Canadien en laissant agir ainsi le Haut Canada se ferme toute voie aux accommodements, et peut dire adieu à la Confédération d'ici à longtemps. On est tout étonné ici de voir le peu d'intérêt que semble porter le Bas-Canada à la colonie de la Rivière Rouge. Puisqu'on voit tous les jours sur les journaux, que l'affaire de la Confédération, entre la R.R. et le Canada n'est pas encore terminée, pourquoi le gouvernement permet-il à des sociétés d'aventuriers de venir jeter le désordre parmi notre population[?]

On nous annonça l'arrivée prochaine du gouverneur McDougall ; personne ne veut le recevoir. On va même jusqu'à dire que s'il se présente comme envoyé par le gouvernement Canadien pour diriger le pays, il sera averti de reprendre bien vite le chemin de Toronto. Monsieur McKenny [*sic*] est, nous dit-on, à la tête du mouvement pour la partie anglaise.

A l'évêché le Rév. Père Lestang [*sic*] a défendu à tous les Pères et prêtres de dire un mot de politique devant qui que ce soit dans la crainte de nous compromettre. J'ai vu Monsieur Mager ce soir ; il m'a dit que Monsieur McKenney et M. Bannatyne avaient passé une partie de la nuit dernière avec le consul Américain : on suppose que c'était pour parler des affaires du pays. Aujourd'hui l'arpenteur Dennis a décidé qu'il irait commencer son arpentage à Pembina en dépit de toute défense.

Voilà les principales nouvelles que j'ai à vous apprendre aujourd'hui. Il y a bien d'autres petites choses mais qui ne sont pas aussi importantes.

Je ne manquerai pas de vous écrire mardi

Bénissez, Monseigneur

Votre tout dévoué serviteur

G. Dugast, Ptre.

P.S. Nous ne voudrions pas que ces petites troubles dérangent votre voyage de Rome. Dans le cas où les affaires requéreraient votre présence nous ne manquerions pas de vous l'écrire. On dit que le gouverneur craint mais je crois qu'il n'y a encore aucun danger.

V : COURRIER DE SAINT-HYACINTHE, 28 OCTOBRE, 1869

St-Boniface, 6 oct., 1869

Monsieur le Rédacteur,

Vous avez un correspondant qui vous met bien au courant de tout ce qui se passe actuellement dans la Rivière-Rouge ; mais vous ne verrez peut-être pas sans plaisir l'expression même du peuple sur ce qui l'occupe le plus en ce moment.

Depuis quelque temps nous entendons parler de ce que le gouvernement général de la confédération prétend faire au sujet du territoire du Nord-Ouest. L'année dernière le Canada a fait avec le gouvernement impérial certains arrangements par rapport à ce territoire. Mais ces arrangements nous sont inconnus. Tout ce que nous savons, c'est qu'il a été question de nous envoyer M. McDougall comme gouverneur. Ce monsieur devait nous arriver avec un conseil formé en dehors du pays. Nous devions, il est vrai, avoir dans ce conseil certains membres des nôtres ; mais assez peu nombreux pour n'être capables de rien dans les décisions de ce conseil.

Plusieurs journaux du Haut et du Bas-Canada ont librement émis leur opinion sur ce qu'il pouvait y avoir d'inconvénients dans l'organisation d'un tel gouvernement. Et à présent que le peuple canadien a vu ces différents débats, ne serait-il pas content de savoir ce que le peuple de la Rivière-Rouge pense lui-même de tout cela ? Le voici :

Il ne paraît pas du tout disposé à recevoir un gouverneur canadien. Un conseil choisi et formé en dehors du pays ne devra pas espérer, nous pensons,

voir ses décrets bien respectés. On peut en juger par les démonstrations que la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge vient de faire. Chaque paroisse s'est choisi deux représentants afin de prononcer en son nom sur les procédés du gouvernement canadien vis-à-vis le peuple de la Rivière-Rouge et telles sont les résolutions que ces représentants ont passées dans leur première assemblée :

1<sup>o</sup>. Ces représentants déclarent au nom de la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge qu'ils sont sujets loyaux de Sa Majesté la reine d'Angleterre.

2<sup>o</sup>. Ces représentants se reconnaissent au nom de la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge redevables à l'honorable compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson de la protection qu'ils ont reçue sous le gouvernement de cette compagnie quelle que soit la nature de ce gouvernement.

3<sup>o</sup>. Le peuple de la Rivière-Rouge ayant jusqu'aujourd'hui maintenu et supporté le gouvernement de l'honorable compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, qui a été établie dans le pays par la couronne d'Angleterre, les dits représentants déclarent, au nom de la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge, que Snow et Dennis ont méconnu le droit des gens en venant établir ici des travaux au nom d'une autorité étrangère sans prêter aucune attention à l'autorité aujourd'hui existante dans le pays.

4<sup>o</sup>. L'honorable compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson se retirant maintenant du gouvernement de la Rivière-Rouge, les dits représentants déclarent, au nom de la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge, qu'ils sont prêts à passer par ce changement-là. Mais en même temps, étant établi, travaillant et vivant sur ces terres qu'il a aidé la compagnie [de la Baie d'Hudson à ouvrir, le peuple] de la Rivière-Rouge ayant acquis de cette façon-là [des droits incontestables dans ce pays], les représentants de la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge proclament hautement ces droits.

5<sup>o</sup>. La colonie de la Rivière-Rouge ayant toujours été soumise à la couronne d'Angleterre, et s'étant développée à part, à travers les chances de sa situation, les dits représentants déclarent au nom de la population métis-canadienne de la Rivière-Rouge, qu'ils feront tout ce qui dépend d'eux pour faire respecter, en leur faveur, les prérogatives accordées si libéralement par la couronne d'Angleterre à n'importe quelle colonie anglaise.

Voilà, M. le rédacteur, ce que nous aimions à vous communiquer. Et ceux qui se donnent la liberté de vous transmettre ces choses ne seront pas les derniers à faire en sorte que les droits du peuple de la Rivière-Rouge soient respectés.

Nous avons l'honneur de nous souscrire vos très humbles serviteurs.

Deux habitants métis-canadiens  
de la Rivière-Rouge

## VIII : FORT GARRY CONVENTION, 16 NOVEMBRE 1869

Les représentants anglais sont salués à leur arrivée au Fort par douze salves de canon pour eux et douze pour les français.

Bruce, Président.

L. Riel, Secrétaire.

Les Anglais se montrent mécontents de ces joyeuses démonstrations d'armes à feu. Ils protestent unanimement contre cette parade d'armes. . . . Les français [*sic*] se montrent plus gais et leur expliquent qu'ils n'ont aucune intention hostile contre leurs compatriotes anglais.

Les Anglais demandent une nouvelle élection d'un Président et d'un Secrétaire. Les français disent qu'ils sont prêts à le faire aussitôt que par une entente franche et cordiale, les représentants des deux Sections de la population ou du moins la Majorité, auront adopté ensemble une ligne de conduite à suivre dans les conjonctures actuelles. Que pour cela il importe que les représentants parlant l'anglais et le français mettent sans délai devant l'assemblée les instructions qu'ils avaient reçues de vive voix ou autrement de leurs constitués. Que les vraies intentions des deux sections de la Population ont besoin d'être bien connues et comprises pour savoir en quoi elles se ressemblent, en quoi elles sont contraires, en quoi entente est possible.

Les anglais disent qu'ils protestent contre la prise d'armes des Français, contre leur occupation du Fort, contre leur opposition illégale à l'entrée de Mons. McDougall, envoyé par la Reine.

Les français disent que ça [a] toujours été leur coutume de prendre les armes pour repousser les partis qui se présentent aux portes de la Colonie avec des intentions redoutables. Ainsi les partis de guerre sauvages ont été repoussés ainsi Mons. McDougall le sera. Il est redoutable aussi lui, parce qu'il y a déjà quelque temps qu'on entend dire qu'il va venir nous gouverner, que la Compagnie a vendu ses droits de gouvernement ici. Et cependant ni l'Angleterre ni la Compagnie ne nous en ont avertis. Et Mons. McDougall est venu en effet pour entrer dans la Colonie. Ayant été repoussé, il est encore là sur le bord des lignes, nous fatiguant, tâchant de s'établir ici notre maître, se déclarant déjà notre maître, sans que nos autorités nous aient dit qu'il l'est. O chers compatriotes, à cause de notre attachement aux constitutions britanniques, que nous respectons comme vous, ensemble n'attendons pas que nos libertés passent à un pouvoir étranger, n'attendons pas, pour les réclamer, qu'elles soient entre d'autres mains, etc. . . . Les anglais paraissent impressionnés. . . .

Hargrave frappe à la porte, demande à parler, il apporte une communication du Gouverneur Mctavish. Les anglais veulent qu'elle soit lue immédiatement. Riel dit qu'il vaudrait mieux attendre que la Convention fasse ce qu'elle a à faire, avant de s'occuper de ce que la Compagnie croit bon de nous dire. — Discussion animée. — Enfin nous lisons cette communication à la fin de la présente séance. —

Ross. — Quelle raison vous a portés à prendre le Fort? — Riel. — Pour le



conserver aux habitants de ce pays et que McDougall avec ses étrangers ne viennent pas s'y établir en maître absolu. Ross. — Les moyens que vous avez pris afin d'arriver à votre but sont inconstitutionnels. . . . La Reine autorise Monsieur McDougall comme il lui plaît. . . . Tout sujet loyal n'a qu'à obéir. — Riel. — Que Mr. McDougall montre son autorisation ! nous n'avons jamais refusé d'obéir à la Reine d'Angleterre. Ross. — Monsieur Mctavish est encore le représentant de la Reine. Vous occupez le Fort malgré lui. — Riel. — J'ignore si notre occupation du Fort lui est bien désagréable. — Ross indigné, Monsieur Mctavish est un digne représentant de la Reine. Riel. — Nous le croyons encore. — Ross. — Eh ! bien ! s'il en est ainsi, comme il est un peu tard et qu'il est temps que nous pensions à ajourner, je demande que la communication que vous a été envoyée par Mons. W. Mctavish soit lue maintenant. Mons. Riel n'y ferait pas d'objection, je le présume par ce qu'il vient de dire. Monsieur Lowman seconde la motion, et Monsieur McKenny est prié de lire devant la Convention ce que Monsieur lui a envoyé. —

Après avoir entendu la lecture de la Protestation de Mons. W. Mctavish, — Ross [dit] : je suis convaincu que nos compatriotes français obéiront maintenant que la volonté du gouverneur est connue et qu'il ordonne en qualité de gouverneur de laisser le Fort. J'espère qu'ils vont le faire, pour avantage à eux-mêmes et pour la satisfaction de leurs parents et amis les anglais de la colonie. — Il y a silence. — Ross se relève et dit qu'il attend avec confiance l'évacuation du Fort par les français de la colonie. Riel : — Pas encore. — Ross, — Vous ne pouvez plus protester ignorance. — Riel, — Une Protestation emphatique n'a pas encore effacé ce qu'il y a de juste dans nos prétentions. — Ross, — Vos actes sont maintenant des actes de rébellion. — Riel, — Si nous nous rebellons contre la compagnie qui nous vend et veut nous livrer et contre le Canada qui veut nous acheter, nous ne nous rebellons pas contre le gouvernement anglais, qui n'a pas encore donné son approbation pour le transfert définitif de ce pays. Eh ! nous reconnaissons le gouvernement d'Assiniboia autant qu'il existe . . . (rires). — Ross, — Vous faites semblant de le reconnaître. — Riel, se tournant vers les français. — Est-ce que nous faisons semblant de le reconnaître ? Voyons, parlez. — Tous, — non ! non ! — De plus nous sommes fidèles à notre patrie. Nous la protégerons contre les dangers qui la menacent. Nous voulons que le peuple de la R. R. soit un peuple libre. Aidons-nous les uns les autres. Nous sommes tous frères et des parents dit Monsieur Ross, et c'est vrai. Ne nous séparons pas. Voyez ce que dit Mons. McTavish : Il dit que de cette assemblée et des décisions de cette assemblée peut venir un bien incalculable. Unissons-nous. Le mal qu'il redoute n'aura pas lieu. Voyez comme il parle. Est-ce étonnant ? Ses enfants sont des métis comme nous. — ajournement.

Je ne puis pas bien écrire et prendre note des discussions vu que je suis obligé de discuter tout le temps. Les reparties sont plus longues. Les réponses ne sont pas toujours aussi concises. Mais ce que j'écris est toujours le sens et presque toujours les termes pour ce qui est du français.

17 novembre, 1869.

La convention siège. Les membres paraissant assez bien ensemble. Les anglais demandent que voulez-vous faire. Ross parle le plus souvent. Riel répond que le désir des français est de faire ce que le peuple de la colonie veut faire. Que la présente attitude des français dit assez ce qu'ils veulent. Que la venue des anglais à cette convention paraît indiquer quelque chose de favorable à l'idée d'une *entente*. Les français demandent jusqu'où les anglais sont prêts à marcher avec eux. Les anglais répondent que leur manière de voir est de laisser entrer Monsieur McDougall sans opposition et une fois établi, leur intention est de lui demander ce qu'ils veulent et, si Monsieur McDougall ne veut ou ne peut leur accorder ce qu'ils demanderont, alors nous le renverrons aussi. Il sera temps de le faire. Les français disent que si McDougall s'établit une fois, rien ne pourra le déguerpir. Que McDougall, gouverneur, aura toute sorte de pièces officielles à leur présenter au nom de la Reine et que de fait ce serait vraiment une rébellion de chercher à le chasser quand il serait établi et que le gouvernement anglais apprenant son entrée paisible avant de connaître exactement nos justes demandes aurait jugé à propos d'accepter le transfert. Mais le gouvernement anglais n'ayant pas encore approuvé les conditions aux quelles le transfert serait effectué, McDougall n'a rien à nous présenter d'officiel pour le temps actuel. C'est le temps de pousser notre faible voix afin qu'au travers des obstacles qui l'empêchait [*sic*] d'arriver à notre Reine nous puissions nous faire entendre assez vite.

Alors Monsieur Ross dit tout ce que il a recommandé à Monsieur McDougall avant de partir d'Ontario. Il dit qu'il lui a fait lui-même voir que son gouvernement et les mesures qu'il prendrait sans doute pour l'ouverture du pays et son plus prompt établissement pourraient peut-être [?] un peu nuisibles aux colons actuels qui s'étaient établis dans le pays et y étaient [?] venus et travaillé depuis longtemps sans prendre des précautions dont ils ont besoin cependant pour conserver intacts leurs droits et leurs privilèges, survenant un changement de gouvernement composé de personnes plus intéressés à promouvoir les intérêts [*sic*] d'une large émigration que les intérêts des premiers colons. Qu'en face de tout cela, lui Monsieur Ross, enfant de ce pays, chérissant ses compatriotes, aime mieux faire taire pour le moment ces craintes, et faire tout ce que dépend de lui pour faire entrer tel quel [*sic*] Monsieur McDougall ; parce que dit-il, je prévois qu'en l'empêchant d'entrer nous attirerons sur la colonie des malheurs incomparables. Il fait un beau discours que je n'écirai pas, ayant à l'écouter pour y répondre. (Je n'écris pas assez vite).

Riel montra ce qu'il y a de noble dans les remontrances que Monsieur Ross a faites à Monsieur McDougall à Ontario, la justesse de ses craintes au sujet des intérêts des premiers colons qui sont ses pères, ses frères, ses parents, ses amis. Que cette position que Monsieur Ross avait prise auprès de Monsieur McDougall est bien inspirée par l'amour de son pays, et maintenant qu'il voit la moitié de son pays prendre la même attitude, lorsque l'autre moitié moins décidée à

poussait [*sic*] des [ses?] droits à faire valoir et que son intention est réellement d'appeler Monsieur McDougall à les traiter plus en sujets Britanniques, lors que toute la colonie constate que Monsieur McDougall ne vient pas comme il devrait avec leur consentement libre et la garantie [*sic*] de leurs droits, comment se fait-il que Monsieur Ross se trouve intimidé [i] plutôt de nous empêcher à lui opposer une résistance énergique, pourquoi ne laisse-t-il pas parler sa voix éloquente au nom de l'amour qu'il porte à son pays natal, invoquant comme nous le faisons l'union des habitants de toute une colonie, invoquant cette union qui peut vous sauver, pour que dans ces jours d'inquiétude immense le peuple s'avance comme un seul homme au devant Monsieur McDougall, en le conjurant au nom de la justice, au nom de la Reine de respecter une colonie Anglaise, de ne pas ambitionner le gouvernement de notre pays avant de nous avoir mis en possession des belles prérogatives, que la couronne d'Angleterre accorde si libéralement à tous ses sujets. Monsieur Ross, faites parler votre patrie, ne cherchez pas à la faire taire. Avec votre instruction, vos talents, dites à nos compatriotes anglais que Monsieur McDougall n'est pas encore notre gouverneur; qu'un piège affreux nous est tendu, en nous laissant dire que notre manière d'agir sera plus loyale, si refusant de reconnaître tous nos droits, après être devenue notre maître, nous songions alors seulement à congédier Monsieur McDougall.

Ajournement jusqu' au 22 Novembre, pour laisser à la cour générale la place de siéger. Est-ce que par cet acte nous ne reconnaissons pas le gouvernement d'Assiniboia? . . .

Le 22 Novembre. La convention siège. Monsieur Ross aborde la question de l'avantage que resulterait de notre entrée dans la confédération, avantage que serait considerable pour nous et important à l'achèvement du plan de la confédération. L'union de ce vaste pays au Canada est nécessaire aux plus chers interests de l'Amerique Britannique du Nord. La reine approuve la confédération Canadienne telle que comprise. Nous sommes *comme la clef de voûte de ce grand projet*. Riel répond que tout ce que Mons. Ross vient de dire est correct et rencontre notre plein accord. Mais si ce pays est indubitablement d'une haute importance pour l'achèvement de la confédération canadienne, pourquoi ne pas le mettre immédiatement sur un pied tel que les habitants actuels continuent à y vivre avantageusement et que les étrangers puissent y trouver en venant l'habiter des institutions toutes prêtes à les rendre heureux en leur conférant les franchises dont toute l'Amérique aime à voir jouir ses enfants indistinctement. Voilà la matière de deux longs discours que firent Ross et Riel. Gunn se lève, se plaint de la perte de temps que nous faisons, en n'arrivant à aucune entente. Il demande que les français déposent leurs armes, afin que les deux sections de la colonie puissent parler sur un même pied. Il propose énergiquement l'entrée de Monsieur McDougall pour que nous puissions lui exposer nos griefs et avoir satisfaction.

Riel répond que en déposant les armes, nous ouvrons trop entièrement nos



portes à celui que nous ne devons pas laisser nous envahir. Que McDougall n'entrera pas.

23 Novembre. La convention siège. — Continuation du même sujet, déposez les armes, laissons entrer Monsieur McDougall disent les anglais. Les français ne veulent pas. Les anglais insistent sur l'idée qu'il nous faut un gouvernement fort, qu'à cause de cela, il nous faut le gouvernement Canadien. Les français avouent qu'ils ont besoin d'un gouvernement fort, parce que celui d'Assiniboia a vraiment montré une faiblesse extrême dans ces derniers jours. La cour générale tenue le 18<sup>e</sup> n'a pas pu se terminer convenablement faute de pouvoir se procurer des jurés. Qu'en conséquence, il est temps que les habitants de la colonie songent à la formation d'un gouvernement provisoire pour leur propre protection et pour traiter avec le Canada, et forcer celui-ci à nous donner une mode de gouvernement responsable. Que la cession des droits de gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson qui s'est vendue sans même nous en parler, nous montre trop sévèrement combien un gouvernement irresponsable se moque de ses sujets pour que nous ne profitions pas de la leçon. Ross parle de la possibilité d'une expédition militaire contre nous, si nous n'agissons pas avec modération. Riel dit que l'hiver nous protège avec ses neiges et ses tempêtes. Que la baie d'Hudson, la Baie du Tonnerre et le territoire Américain ne sont pas aisés à franchir pour nous atteindre d'ici au printemps. Que nous avons six mois devant nous et que pendant ce temps nous aurons des arrangements avec le Canada. Ajournement, pas d'entente, peu d'espoir d'une entente. Schultz et les Canadas mènent le diable.

24 Novembre 1869. Avant d'entrer en séance : nous avons les français [*sic*] passé la nuit en conseil. J'ai parlé pendant sept heures de temps pour amener le Comité National à se former en gouvernement Provisoire. Pas un n'était prêt. Que de craintes et d'hésitations à vaincre. C'est incroyable les répugnances que j'ai eu à leur faire surmonter. Ce qu'il craignait [*sic*] le plus, c'était les apparences d'une rébellion contre la Reine. Ce n'est qu'à force de leur montrer et de leur dire que nous restons fidèles à la Reine ; que le gouvernement d'Assiniboia en se vendant s'est tellement affaibli qu'il n'a plus la force nécessaire pour nous protéger ; que s'il lui reste encore quelque chose d'un gouvernement, c'est le nom. Qu'il s'occupe si peu de nous que malgré les hauts cris et tout ce que nous faisons pour repousser McDougall, si le gouvernement d'Assiniboia rencontrait McDougall, il nous remettrait bon gré mal gré entre ses mains. Que si la Reine savait ce que nous voulons, elle nous écouterait. Qu'elle le sait peut-être déjà et qu'elle nous écouterait sans aucun doute. Que cependant McDougall se prépare à compléter tous ses arrangements avec le conseil d'Assiniboia pour le 1<sup>er</sup> décembre. Qu'en se (McDougall) déclarant gouverneur ce jour-là, le gouvernement d'Assiniboia est fini. Il n'a donc que très peu de jours à vivre dans une parfaite incapacité. Que puisque McDougall ne veut pas nous parler, comme notre lettre du 21 octobre lui dit qu'il peut s'adresser à nous, pour avoir la permission d'entrer dans ce pays, ne le laissons pas devenir gouverneur avant de s'être arrangé



au nom du Canada avec nous. S'il se déclare gouverneur le 1 décembre, il ne sera pas plus gouverneur qu'avant. Assiniboia sera mort, formons donc un gouvernement Provisoire d'avance, parlons en demain aux représentants anglais. Prenons les livres publics, l'argent public pour forcer McDougall à avoir affaire au public. Ces livres et cet argent public sont au public. Il ne faut pas que McDougall s'en empare malgré nous. Les membres du comité consentirent enfin, et je les avertis que pour courir moins de risque, nous ne proclamerons la formation du gouvernement Provisoire qu'après le 1 Décembre. Que c'était Schultz et les canadiens perturbateurs qui . . . [?] *tant que l'incapacité du Conseil d'Assiniboia nous* obligeaient de pair avec la conduite de McDougall à prendre des mesures extrêmes qui retomberaient sur eux.

La convention siège.

Les anglais demandent aux français quels sont leurs plans. Riel demande aux anglais si leur désir est franchement de s'unir aux français pour surmonter les présentes difficultés. Réponse évasive. Riel reprend en leur disant, vous saurez en effet ce que nous voulons nous autres. Nous voulons ce que veulent toutes les paroisses françaises. Et elles ont voulu former un gouvernement provisoire pour notre protection et pour traiter avec le Canada. Nous vous invitons à nous joindre avec sincérité. Ce gouvernement sera composé également de français et d'anglais. Il ne sera que provisoire. Les anglais disent qu'ils ont besoin avant de consulter leurs paroisses respectives. Que leurs instructions ne les autorisent pas à en agir ainsi. Ajournement jusqu'au 1 Décembre 1869.

1 Décembre. Les français attendent les anglais qui sont à Winnipeg et ne veulent pas venir. Enfin Bannatyne vient disant qu'il apporte la proclamation de la Reine. Riel examine le document, et dit en riant, que c'en a bien l'air. En remettant la feuille à Monsieur Bannatyne, il lui dit : *take that big sheet* (prononçant très brièvement le double *e*). Mes amis, si c'est la proclamation de la Reine, faisons attention. Pesons nos actes avant d'agir. Il nous faut de la prudence plus que jamais dans la revendication de nos droits si chers et si certains. Quelque temps après les députés anglais viennent pâles et pourtant un peu plus joyeux que de coutume.

Riel : Si Monsieur McDougall est vraiment gouverneur aujourd'hui, la chance pour nous est plus belle que jamais. Il n'a plus qu'à nous prouver son désir de bien nous traiter. S'il nous garantit nos droits, je suis un de ceux qui iront à sa rencontre pour l'escorter jusqu'au siège de son gouvernement. Enfin dit Ross, que lui demanderons-nous? Un certain temps de conversation irrégulière se passe, et les français demandent deux heures pour formuler ce qu'ils veulent. Ajournement jusqu'à six heures du soir. . . .

A 6 heures réunion des membres de la convention. Notre bill de droits est discuté. Toutes les questions sont acceptées par les anglais sur cette considération que lors même qu'il y a des choses un peu contraires à leur manière de voir, il ne coûtait rien de les présenter à M. McDougall avec qui un arrangement pourrait s'obtenir, soit, en vertu de sa commission, soit par un acte du Parlement Canadien.

La proposition d'envoyer des délégués à Monsieur McDougall est mise en avant, mais voici que les anglais refusent tous d'y participer. Riel se lève : et parle chaleureusement. Allez, dit-il, retournez-vous en paisiblement sur vos fermes. Restez dans les bras de vos femmes. Donnez cet exemple à vos enfants. Mais regardez nous agir. Nous allons travailler et obtenir la garantie de nos droits et des vôtres. Vous viendrez à la fin les partager.

La convention des 40 Délégués tenue au Fort Garry en Janvier-Février 1870 a été convoquée par le gouvernement Provisoire et sa tâche a été définie par lui.

A la fin de l'assemblée en masse qui a eu lieu au Fort Garry le 20 janvier 1870, le Président du gouvernement Provisoire fit motion secondée par Mons. Bannatyne que 20 représentants anglais fussent élus pour reconstruire 20 autres représentants français le 25 janvier à midi, dans la maison de la cour, afin d'examiner la commission de Mons. D. A. Smith et voir ce qu'il y a de mieux à faire à ce sujet. (Voyez Begg 238)

Quand la convention se réunit, Riel fit motion que le juge Black fut élu Président de la convention. Il le fut. (Voyez Begg 248)

Lorsque la convention signifia à Mess. les Commissionnaires Canadiens son acceptation de l'invitation qu'ils avaient faite au peuple de la R. R. d'envoyer des Délégués à Ottawa, la convention voulut aller plus loin en nommant elle-même la délégation. Mais le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire arrêta là la convention, en lui montrant qu'elle avait tout simplement à reconnaître au nom de la partie encore récalcitrante de la population, le gouvernement Provisoire proclamé le 8 Décembre 1869, et ensuite en achever autant que possible l'organisation. Riel finit par être reconnu comme Président du gouvernement de tout le pays. (Voyez Begg 268)

Sur les 20 représentants anglais 12 votèrent pour le gouvernement provisoire  
Présidé par Riel

Thomas Bunn  
Dr. Bird  
John Sutherland  
John Fraser  
Judge Black  
Donald Gunn  
James Ross  
George Flett  
Robert Tait  
W. Lonsdale  
George Gunn  
Alfred H. Scott

votèrent avec les 20 représentants français pour Riel. John Taylor assistait à la convention dont il était membre pour Headingly et allait durant les derniers jours de la convention pour comploter à Headingly avec les cent hommes du Portage que commandait Boulton et que

Thomas Scott avait le plus contribué à organiser contre le gouvernement Provisoire.

Alors une motion passée unanimement par la convention remerciant Monsieur le Juge Black pour la manière dont il avait présidé, la convention le pria de céder son siège au Président du gouvernement Provisoire, ce qui fut fait. Riel alors,

séance tenante, nomma Monsieur le juge Black le Révérend Mons. Ritchot et Monsieur A. H. Scott Délégués pour aller à Ottawa, et le 12 Février 1870, Monsieur Th. Bunn Secrétaire d'Etat sous le gouvernement Provisoire écrivait à chaque nommé Délégué :

Monsieur,

J'ai ordre de vous informer que vous avez été appointé par le Président des Territoires du Nord-Ouest comme commissionnaire avec Messieurs... pour traiter avec le gouvernement de la Puissance du Canada sur les conditions de notre entrée dans la confédération,

Je suis, Monsieur,

Votre Obéissant serviteur,

Th. Bunn,

Secr. d'Etat.

Voyez Begg, 323, 324, 325, 326.

En renvoyant souvent à Begg pour certains faits, je dois faire remarquer que cet auteur n'est pas suspect, il est incomplet : il déplace les faits et les défigure selon qu'il peut sauver quelque humiliation aux siens et rabaisser le mérite des Français.

## XII : DÉCLARATION DES HABITANTS DE LA TERRE DE RUPERT ET DU NORD-OUEST

Il est admis en principe de morale que la puissance publique est inviolable de droit ; comme aussi il est reconnu qu'un peuple qui n'a pas de gouvernement est libre d'adopter une forme de gouvernement plutôt qu'une autre ; d'accepter ou de refuser celle qui lui est proposée : c'est d'après ces deux principes que le peuple de la Terre de Rupert et du Nord-Ouest se contentait de gémir en silence, et de tolérer l'espèce d'asservissement dans lequel l'avaient placé les circonstances particulières qui avaient entouré son berceau.

Une compagnie d'aventuriers, connue sous le nom de Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, et revêtue de certains pouvoirs par Sa Majesté Charles II vint s'établir dans la terre de Rupert et dans de Nord-Ouest pour y faire la traite. Cette Compagnie formait une agrégation d'hommes qui avait besoin d'une constitution. Mais comme il s'agissait de Commerce cette constitution s'y rapportait surtout. Cependant comme il n'y avait alors aucun gouvernement qui s'occupait des intérêts du peuple déjà établi dans le pays, besoin fut à ce peuple de recourir pour les affaires judiciaires aux officiers de cette compagnie : de là l'origine du gouvernement qui a régi le pays jusqu'à cette époque.

Le gouvernement ainsi admis était loin de répondre aux besoins de la population actuelle, qui à force d'énergie et de dévouement s'est développée, s'est accrue, et s'est élevée au point de mériter, à cause de son nombre, de sa civilisation, et de son commerce, une place parmi les *nations*.

Toujours mu par les principes émis plus haut, le peuple de la Terre de Rupert et du Nord-Ouest supportait généreusement le susdit gouvernement et lui obéissait fidèlement, lorsque, contre le droit des gens en Mars 1869 ce gouvernement abandonna et transporta au Canada, par des transactions, qu'il n'a pas même daigné communiquer à son peuple, tous les droits qu'il avait, et ceux qu'il prétendait avoir dans le pays.

Or comme il est un autre principe admis par tous les publicistes (parmi lesquels nous pouvons citer Berclay [*sic*] et Duvoisin) qu'un peuple devient libre, et peut désormais se gouverner comme il le juge à propos, lorsque la puissance à laquelle il était soumis l'abandonne ou l'assujettit contre son gré à une puissance étrangère, et que de plus, elle ne transfère aucun droit à la puissance à laquelle elle le soumet.

Nous, les représentants élus par le peuple, réunis en conseil au Fort Garry ; après avoir invoqué le Dieu des nations, appuyés sur ces principes fondamentaux de morale, déclarons solennellement, au nom de nos constituants, et en nos propres noms, devant Dieu et devant les hommes :

1<sup>ier</sup>. Que du jour où le Gouvernement, que nous avons toujours respecté nous a abandonné en transférant à une puissance étrangère l'autorité sacrée qui lui avait été confiée, nous devenons libres et dégagés de toute obéissance à son égard, et que La Seule Seule [*sic*] Autorité légitime aujourd'hui dans la terre de Rupert et du Nord-Ouest est l'Autorité provisoirement accordée par le peuple à Nous ses représentants.

2<sup>ième</sup>. Que nous refusons de reconnaître l'autorité du Canada qui prétend avoir droit de venir nous imposer une forme de gouvernement encore plus contraire à nos droits et à nos intérêts que ne l'a été le gouvernement jusqu'à ces derniers temps.

3<sup>ième</sup>. Que le 1<sup>ier</sup> novembre dernier, en déléguant une expédition chargée de reconduire au delà des bornes de notre pays le Sieur William McDougall et ses compagnons, qui s'avancait sur nos terres au nom du Canada sans une notification préalable de sa part, et malgré une défense à lui intimée par nous, pour venir gouverner ici en despote, nous n'avons fait qu'agir conformément au droit sacré que tout citoyen a de s'opposer énergiquement à l'asservissement de sa patrie.

4<sup>ième</sup>. Que nous continuons et que nous continuerons à nous opposer au Canada de toutes nos forces, à l'entrée du gouvernement du Canada dans notre pays, sous la forme énoncée, et en cas de persistance de sa part à venir nous troubler par des incursions belligerantes, nous protestons d'avance contre ces actes injustes et le déclarons responsable devant Dieu et devant les peuples des malheurs incalculables qui seraient la suite de sa téméraire ambition. Qu'il sache qu'avant de voir asservir notre patrie, nous saurons tirer partie des moyens de défense que la Providence nous a mis entre les mains, et que ce n'est pas pour la voir envahie par des étrangers que nous avons tant de fois défendue, au prix de notre sang, contre des hordes de barbares devenues aujourd'hui nos amis et nos alliés.

5<sup>ième</sup>. Que cependant la puissance du Canada nous trouvera toujours prêts à



entrer avec elle dans des négociations favorables à son agrandissement et à notre prospérité.

A l'appui de ces déclarations, comptant sur la divine Providence, nous engageons par serment nos vies, nos fortunes et notre honneur.

Donné au Fort Garry le 8 Dec. 1869.

Johny Bruce, Président  
L. Riel, Sec.

XV : LES MEMOIRES DE LOUIS SCHMIDT. CHAPITRE V, 1868-1870

*Jeudi 18 janvier, 1912, No. 46, p. 4.*

\* \* \* \*

Comme à mon retour du college en 1861, je trouvai la colonie dans l'état de désarroi. La famine la menaçait. Les sauterelles l'avaient envahie l'année précédente, elles avaient déposé leurs oeufs, et les petites voraces qui en sortiraient mangeraient toute la végétation.

Ce n'est pas quand elles arrivent que ces sauterelles font le plus de dommages. Alors les grains sont presque à maturité, et on en sauve toujours une bonne partie de leurs déprédations.

Peu après leur arrivée, elles se mettent à pondre. La ponte faite, elles s'en vont par rangs serrés, comme se traînant et engourdies, jusqu'à ce qu'un obstacle, un mur par exemple, les arrête. Elles s'y entassent et meurent.

Mais l'année suivante, les petits qui sortent de terre dévorent tout. Il est inutile d'ensemencer les terres. A mesure que le grain pousse, il est mangé.

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 25 janvier, 1912, No. 47, p. 4.*

La chasse au bison était finie aussi, ou peut s'en faut, pour les gens de la Rivière Rouge.

Tout le buffalo était de l'autre côté du Missouri, ou refoulé vers l'Ouest dans le Montana, sur les bords de la Rivière au Lait et au-delà.

Dans ces conjonctures, les autorités du pays, Mgr. Taché en tête, commencèrent à organiser des comités de secours, à s'adresser aux personnes charitables des pays voisins, les Etats-Unis, et le Canada. La Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson souscrivit aussi une forte somme d'argent, et ainsi la famine fut évitée, ou du moins on en circonscrivit beaucoup les ravages.

Je trouvai aussi un grand changement parmi le peuple. On commençait à parler *politique*, même parmi nos gens. Ce mot était tout nouveau alors : on ne le croirait pas aujourd'hui, où tout le monde, jusqu'au sauvage et au dernier marmiton, le connaît et le pratique.

La Confédération Canadienne venait de se former, et elle voulait déjà s'agrandir. Une loi passée au dernier parlement autorisait le gouvernement à acquérir les Territoires de l'Ouest, pour les unir au Canada. Un marché avait

été conclu par lequel la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, souveraine de ces contrées, céda tous ces droits, moyennant trois cents mille louis à lui être payés, et la Rivière Rouge allait devenir partie du Canada.

Voilà ce dont on parlait. Les uns s'en réjouissaient et en attendaient monts et merveilles[s]. Les autres, plus prudents ou n'y comprenant goutte, se taisaient ou faisaient de grandes réserves.

#### ARRIVÉE DE RIEL — 1868

C'est sur ces entrefaites, vers la fin de l'été, qu'arriva à St. Vital mon ami Riel, venant des Etats-Unis.

J'allai le voir peu après, et il me demanda de demeurer avec lui pendant quelque temps, ce que je fis bien volontiers.

Nos entretiens roulaient naturellement sur les changements qui se préparaient pour notre pays. Nous tirions aussi des plans. Mais comme nous ne connaissions encore rien de définitif sur les instructions du gouvernement canadien, nous devions attendre les événements, bien résolus toutefois de nous occuper des affaires publiques quand le moment en sera [serait?] venu.

Nous sommes maintenant au mois de février 1869. Les vivres commencent à manquer en bien des endroits. Il faut trouver de nouvelles industries pour s'en procurer.

Plusieurs de mes lecteurs savent que la Rivière Rouge est très poissonneuse en été, mais je ne sache pas que personne eût jusqu'alors fait la pêche en hiver, sous la glace. C'est ce qu'on va faire maintenant.

Je ne sais pas qui en a eu la première idée, mais celui-là l'a eu heureuse dans tous les cas, car bientôt il n'y eut pas de place pour tendre des rêts ; tout le monde s'y était mis. C'est près de l'embou[chu]re de l'Assiniboine, en remontant la Rouge, que la pêche se faisait. C'était merveilleux de voir la quantité de poissons qui se prenait. C'était une véritable providence.

J'eus là l'occasion de faire profit des connaissances que j'avais acquises au Rabasca dans ce genre d'industrie, et mon expérience servit à plusieurs.

C'est aussi vers ce temps-là que je reçus enfin, par l'entremise de Mgr. Taché, l'argent que le gouvernement américain me devait pour mes services chez les Sioux en 1864. Le pauvre Père André, alors dans la Saskatchewan depuis 1865, n'avait cessé, depuis son voyage à St. Paul, de faire des instances réitérées pour que ses hommes fussent payés, et il avait enfin réussi dans ses démarches, ce qui le soulagea beaucoup.

J'employai cet argent à m'acheter des boeufs et des charettes, et au départ de la caravane ordinaire pour les Etats-Unis, j'étais du nombre des voyageurs.

Nous allions, comme on disait alors, *à la farine*. Les marchands et autres qui avaient de l'argent l'achetaient et nous la transportions pour en avoir la moitié. Nous nous rendîmes jusqu'à la rivière des *Sauks* (Sauk Rapids) où il y avait des moulins, à quelque 50 ou 60 milles en deça de St.-Cloud.

A mon retour, j' allai habiter une maison que Mgr. Taché m'avait prêtée sur le haut de la rivière, et je pris avec moi ma mère et deux de mes soeurs qui avaient toujours demeuré chez mon grand'père.

C'est à la suite de ce voyage qu'on vit pour la première fois des lampes à pétrole dans le pays.

Après les foins, je repartais pour les Etats-Unis, et j'allais jusqu'à St-Cloud. C'est pendant ce voyage qu'éclatèrent les troubles de la Rivière Rouge, auxquels je vais maintenant consacrer quelques pages.

#### TROUBLES DE LA RIVIERE ROUGE 1869-70

Qu'on ne s'attende pas cependant à ce que je fasse un historique complet de ces événements fameux, dont l'écho s'étendit bientôt jusqu'aux vieux pays.

Je ne suis pas un historien et ne fais pas oeuvre d'historien. Ces notes écrites à la hâte et sans préparation — mon style le montre — toutes véridiques qu'elles soient, sont plutôt des impressions passagères et personnelles qu'un écrit suivi.

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 1 février, 1912, No. 48, p. 4.*

Plusieurs écrivains ont raconté les troubles qui ont précédé l'entrée de la colonie anglaise d'Assiniboia dans la Confédération Canadienne, et la plupart sont assez exacts. Ils ne diffèrent que dans leurs appréciations suivant qu'ils sont anglais ou français ou de parti-pris.

Pour ceux qui veulent se renseigner à fond, je recommanderais, parmi les Anglais, l'ouvrage d'Alexandre Begg, — rare maintenant dit-on — et parmi les Français, ceux de l'abbé Geo. Dugas, tous deux témoins des faits qu'ils racontent. Puis les écrits plus récents du R. P. Morice, O.M.I., qui [les] résume tous et les rectifie parfois, et qui contient des détails inédits très intéressants pour ce qui regarde l'invasion des Fénians, dans l'automne de 1871.

Pour moi, outre mes impressions personnelles, et tout en suivant le cours chronologique des événements, je m'arrêterai plus spécialement à quelque épisodes qu'on a à peu près passée sous silence, ou sur lesquels on n'a pas assez appuyé.

Ceci dit, je viens à mon récit.

Disons tout d'abord que dès le commencement de l'hiver '68-9, le gouvernement canadien, sous prétexte de soulager les misères d'un peuple que la famine menaçait, avait envoyé des employés pour ouvrir le chemin dit de Dawson, à la Pointe de Chênes.

Première irrégularité. Le pays n'était pas canadien, et c'était un acte de sans-gêne inouï pour un gouvernement d'aller entreprendre des travaux publics dans un pays étranger, sans l'assentiment des autorités du lieu, qui pour nous étaient le gouvernement d'Assiniboia. Le pays était vendu, dira-t-on, mais il

fallait attendre au moins que le vrai propriétaire, la Reine, l'eût livré. Or, sa proclamation ne parut que le 15 juillet 1870.

Les desseins du Canada devinrent bientôt manifestes. Il voulait s'introduire dans le pays, comme dans une terre déserte, sans plus s'occuper du peuple qui l'habitait que s'il n'existait pas. Car quelques mois plus tard, il envoie des arpenteurs, sous les ordres du colonel Dennis, qui se mirent à tirer des lignes de tous côtés, sans s'occuper s'ils étaient sur des propriétés privées ou non.

Les métis, cependant, sous l'impulsion de Riel commençaient à s'agiter. Ayant pris conseil de personnes sages et plus expérimentées qu'eux, ils tinrent d'abord des conciliabules secrets, puis des assemblées plus nombreuses, et ils décidèrent de s'opposer par tous les moyens à l'entrée du gouverneur que le Canada envoyait et dont on annonçait la prochaine arrivée. Ils voulaient auparavant avoir des garanties sûres que tous leurs droits seraient sauvegardés. Ce fut la base sur laquelle ils s'appuyaient pour se soulever et prendre toutes les mesures voulues afin de réussir dans leur entreprise. Ceci se passa au mois d'octobre 1869.

Leur première action d'éclat, pour montrer qu'ils étaient sérieux, fut d'aller arrêter les arpentages qui se faisaient à St-Vital, en plein coeur des établissements métis. Puis ils allèrent s'établir à la Rivière Sale, près de la mission de St-Norbert, où ils barrèrent le chemin public, ne voulant pas que personne y passât sans leur autorisation. C'était le chemin qui conduisait à la frontière américaine, par où devait venir le nouveau gouverneur, Wm. Macdougall.

Le parti canadien, c'est-à-dire, les employés déjà rendus et tous ces nouveaux colons qui étaient venus les uns après les autres, dans ces dernières années, de la province d'Ontario, ce parti fut abasourdi par tous ces actes hardis. Il se voyait devancé, et peut-être mis hors d'état de parvenir à ses fins, qui étaient de voir la nouvelle administration entrer au plus tôt en fonction, pour l'influencer, la diriger à sa guise, et, par ce moyen-là faire de la colonie une province anglaise à l'image de celle d'Ontario.

Il s'adressa aux autorités judiciaires locales pour faire réprimer ces actes qu'il appelait illégaux et subversifs du bon ordre. Les hypocrites ! Ils étaient tous, ou à peu près, tous, des contempteurs du droit, des briseurs de prison même, et ils venaient s'adresser aux autorités !

Leurs démarches, comme bien on pense, n'eurent aucun résultat. Le Conseil d'Assiniboia s'assembla d'urgence et décida d'avertir Macdougall qu'il n'eut pas à entrer dans la colonie avant que des arrangements soient faits pour apaiser les mécontents.

Je viens à mon voyage pour un instant. Sur le chemin de retour, nous campâmes un soir avec le nouveau gouverneur et sa suite qui ne voyageaient pas avec des boeufs, comme nous. C'était à la Grand' Fourche.

Macdougall était sans doute au courant de ce qui se passait à la Rivière Rouge, car un de nos gens, étant allé faire un tour à leur feu, il y fit la connaissance de



M. Provencher, le secrétaire du nouveau gouverneur. Tout en faisant face le plus philosophiquement possible à la situation, il paraissait malgré lui assez inquiet de la tournure que prenaient les événements. Pauvre Provencher, il ne devait pas encore voir le Fort Garry, à son premier voyage à la Rivière Rouge, car il n'alla pas plus loin que St-Norbert, plus loin toutefois que son seigneur !

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 8 février, 1912, No. 49, p. 4.*

Lorsque nous passâmes à Pembina, le gouverneur se trouvait dans le fort anglais, mais il ne devait pas y demeurer longtemps. Une demi-journée plus loin, aux deux Petites Pointes, nous rencontrions les métis, Lépine en tête, qui allaient lui signifier de retourner sur le sol américain, ce qu'il dut faire, bien malgré lui.

Enfin j'arrivais à Winnipeg le 5 novembre. En passant au fort, que les métis occupaient depuis trois jours, je reconnus un de mes voisins qui montait la garde près de la petite porte de l'Est. J'allai lui serrer le main et lier un petit bout de conversation. Je remarquai qu'il parlait presque à voix basse, et comme si je l'avais interrompu dans ses prières, car s'il avait son fusil sur l'épaule il avait aussi le chapelet à la main. Je n'entendais, non plus, aucun bruit au dedans des murs. J'appris plus tard que c'était la consigne.

Comme la partie entreprise était sérieuse et pleine de périls, les métis, fidèles à leur passé, l'avaient commencée dans la prière et le recueillement. Comme la foi était encore vivace chez eux ! Comment n'auraient-ils pas été de bons soldats ?

Quelques jours plus tard lorsque j'eus mis un peu d'ordre chez moi, j'allai moi-même demeurer au fort avec Riel.

Avant même d'entrer dans le Fort, et dès leur première organisation à St-Norbert, les métis avaient formé un conseil composé d'un ou de deux principaux citoyens de chaque paroisse, avec John Bruce, de St. Boniface, comme président, et Louis Riel, de St-Vital, comme secrétaire. Ce Conseil siégeait pour ainsi dire en permanence, car les événements se précipitaient et devenaient de plus en plus graves.

Il ne faut pas croire en effet que le parti canadien s'avouait déjà vaincu, ou demeurerait inactif. Au contraire, Macdougall à Pembina, Dennis au Portage la Prairie et ailleurs, et Schultz à Winnipeg, organisaient une contre révolution, et s'efforçaient d'attirer à eux l'ancienne population anglaise de la colonie, demeurée à peu près neutre jusque là, quoiqu'avec un penchant plutôt hostile aux métis français.

Le premier soin donc du conseil, après son entrée dans le Fort, fut d'avoir avec lui les anciens colons anglais. Pour cela des lettres leur furent envoyées, leur expliquant notre attitude et nos vues, et leur demandant d'envoyer des représentants pour conférer avec nous, afin d'en venir à une entente commune sur les conditions à demander au Canada avant de lui permettre l'entrée du pays.

Cette invitation fut acceptée, et au jour indiqué, le 16 novembre, douze délégués anglais étaient réunis à ceux des métis.

Mais, après plusieurs jours de délibérations, interrompues par toutes sortes d'incidents, la convention dut être dissoute faute d'entente.

Riel résolut alors d'agir seul avec les métis. Déjà, il avait pris possession des magasins et de la plupart des bâties de la Compagnie. Il rassembla le plus d'hommes, et se mit, en un mot, en état de faire face à tous ses ennemis.

Il donna le nom de gouvernement provisoire à son premier conseil, et continua de s'en appeler le secrétaire, quoiqu'il en fût en réalité le véritable président. Il prit cependant ce titre quelques jours plus tard, et je fus nommé son secrétaire.

Riel était né orateur. Son caractère le prédisposait à cela. D'une nature enthousiaste et un peu exaltée, ses discours faisaient une grande impression sur les foules. Et puis, la cause qu'il avait à défendre — cause noble et juste comme il en fut rarement — était déjà par elle-même un stimulant naturel à l'enthousiasme. Aussi, il n'est pas étonnant de voir l'effet qu'il faisait sur ces natures simples et honnêtes, comme l'étaient les métis, lorsqu'il leur démontrait leurs droits les plus sacrés foulés aux pieds par l'envahissement de leur pays par le Canada.

Il était aussi poète à ses heures, comme on dit.

Après sa sortie du collège, et avant de revenir à la Rivière-Rouge, il avait vécu pendant quelque temps avec Louis Fréchette à Chicago. C'est là qu'ils s'exerçaient tous deux à la poésie, l'un, Fréchette, s'efforçant d'imiter Hugo, et l'autre Lamartine.

Il forma aussi un autre conseil, appelé conseil militaire, composé des capitaines des différentes brigades, et ayant Ambroise Lépine à sa tête avec le titre d'Adjutant Général.

Lépine était tout l'opposé de Riel.

Froid, positif, il ne s'emballait jamais, comme on dit aujourd'hui. Mais il était la bravoure même.

D'une prestance superbe, doué d'une force musculaire extraordinaire, il était fait pour commander, et il devint comme tout naturellement le chef des soldats de la révolution.

Comme tous les hommes supérieurs, il était doux envers les petits. Mais il ne ménageait pas les grands et les forts.

Un jour, un capitaine, Toussaint Lussier, un géant, l'homme le plus fort de la Rivière Rouge avait été envoyé pour ramener prisonnier un des principaux rebelles parmi les métis, William Dease. Il revira bredouille. Lépine lui fit une terrible semonce, et le traita presque de lâche. J'aurais cru que Lussier allait sauter sur lui.

Le pauvre Elzéar Goulet qui eut une si triste fin, ressemblait beaucoup à Lépine. Il en avait toutes les qualités et les défauts. Il l'emportait sur lui par ses manières amènes, et il était l'idole des soldats.

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 15 février, 1912, No. 50, p. 4.*

O'Donoghue était la froideur même quoique le sang irlandais bouillonnât continuellement dans son sein. Ce sang lui remontait au visage lorsque quelque chose n'allait pas à son gré. Il était brave aussi.

Maintenant que les grandes lignes de ce mouvement insurrectionnel sont données, je ne vais relater que les faits les plus saillants, car je m'aperçois qu'il faudrait un volume pour tout raconter, et je n'ai pas les loisirs ni les dispositions pour le faire. De plus, ce travail me devient fastidieux à l'extrême, et on me pardonnera de l'abréger le plus possible.

Peu après la dissolution de la convention du 16 novembre, Macdougall fit paraître une proclamation au nom de la Reine annonçant l'annexion des Territoires du Nord-Ouest au Canada. C'était fait sans autorité, et il fut désavoué plus tard. Mais c'en était assez pour faire une grande impression sur les anglais hésitants, et même sur quelques métis français qui n'avaient pas encore osé se rejoindre à Riel. Ceux-ci s'intitulaient les loyaux et nous étions les rebelles. Après la proclamation de Macdougall le gouverneur Mactavish publia à son tour la déchéance du gouvernement d'Assiniboia.

Ce fut une crise difficile à traverser, mais nous lui fîmes face comme aux autres. Nous répondîmes à la proclamation de Macdougall par un autre que nous fîmes imprimer à Winnipeg (et où j'aidai le R. P. Allard à corriger les épreuves). Notre proclamation parut le 8 décembre.

Mais avant d'aller plus loin, racontons un fait qui nous donna aussitôt du prestige parmi un grand nombre, mais qui augmenta aussi, si possible, l'animosité de nos ennemis. Je veux parler de la prise de Schultz et de ses cinquante compagnons le 7 décembre.

Le gouvernement canadien avait un dépôt de provisions, consistant en quarts de lard, farine, etc., dans le magasin du Dr. Schultz, à Winnipeg. Riel, qui avait l'oeil partout, s'aperçut un jour qu'on transportait ces provisions ailleurs, probablement au Portage la Prairie pour nourrir nos ennemis. Il défendit ce transport et mit des gardes autour du magasin. De son côté, Schultz, sous prétexte d'empêcher Riel d'enlever lui-même ces provisions, avait réuni autour de lui un grand nombre d'hommes armés qui allaient et venaient sans cesse, et n'étaient en fin de compte, que des espions et des messagers pour Macdougall, Dennis et les autres. Ce que voyant, Riel fit assiéger la maison, et tous ceux qui en sortaient étaient fait prisonniers. C'est ainsi que le fameux Thomas Scott fut pris.

Mais les hommes de Riel se fatiguaient à la fin de cette garde incessante au milieu des gros froids de l'hiver, et ils demandèrent la reddition de tous ces fauteurs de discorde. Le 7 décembre, Riel acquiesça à leur désir. Il fit sortir du Fort Garry une centaine d'hommes, et deux canons qu'il fit pointer sur la maison en question, à une petite distance. Alors il ordonna à Lépine d'aller sommer les assiégés de se rendre. Celui-ci n'hésita pas, mais le grand Morin (Baptiste) qui ne croyait pas raisonnable d'envoyer un homme seul dans ce repaire, s'offrit de



l'accompagner, et tous deux partirent. Ce fut un moment solennel et tragique. Nos hommes [en] sortiraient-ils vivants?

Enfin, au bout de quelques minutes qui nous parurent bien longues, la capitulation fut signée, les hommes désarmés et conduits en dedans des murs du Fort.

Le 8 décembre 1869 fut un jour mémorable pour nous. Outre la prise de cinquante prisonniers et l'émanation de notre fière proclamation, nous devions ce jour-là arborer le nouveau drapeau du gouvernement provisoire. Ce drapeau a été conservé. Il avait un fond blanc, avec des fleurs de lys et de trèfle, et un gros bison en relief, dans le bas.

Aussitôt après la grand'messe, que plusieurs d'entre nous pouvaient aller entendre à la cathédrale, et le dîner, la cérémonie commença. Il y avait déjà un mâât dans le Fort, auquel était hissé, le dimanche, le pavillon de la Compagnie. C'est là qu'on mit le nôtre.

Riel fit un beau discours, comme il avait coutume d'en faire, et j'y allai aussi de mon premier *speech*. De plus, pour fêter ce grand jour, Riel permit pour la première fois à ses soldats de trinquer en l'honneur du nouveau drapeau. Il fit apporter une grande chaudière rempli de liqueur, avec une gobelet à côté, et chacun allait se servir à sa fantaisie.

Je ne puis m'empêcher de rapporter un fait assez comique au sujet de ce drapeau.

Il y avait du côté de St-Boniface un vieux Français qui se faisait appeler le docteur Pillard, et qui sympathisait complètement avec nous. Il venait presque tous les jours au Fort. Il demeurait sur le chemin que je suivais pour me rendre chez moi, et j'arrêtais souvent le voir.

Le soir de ce jour, en m'en allant, je le vis à sa porte, gesticulant, et montrant le poing du côté du Fort, en proférant des paroles indignées : " Comment ," disait-il, " vous avez arboré le drapeau blanc, ce drapeau abhorré et symbole de la tyrannie que j'ai traversé les mers pour ne point voir ! Ah ! cela ne vous portera pas bonheur."

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 22 février, 1912, No. 51, p. 4.*

" Mais," lui dis-je, en souriant, " je suppose que vos rois n'ont pas le monopole du blanc. Vous ne vouliez pas, que diable ! qu'on se servît du noir, ni du rouge qui est trop anglais pour nous. Allons, calmez-vous, nous ne voulons pas proclamer de monarchies, nous n'avons pas de prétendants ici."

Et je m'en allai en riant, le laissant tout interloqué. Ce même Pillard me fit encore bien rire plus tard, et si j'y pense, je reparlerai de lui.

Pendant les événements marchaient. Macdougall et Dennis étaient repartis pour le Canada. Schultz et beaucoup d'agitateurs étaient prisonniers.



Nous jouissions d'une sort d'accalmie et d'un peu de répit. Mais la tempête était proche.

Le gouvernement canadien commençait à nous envoyer des délégués. Ce furent d'abord le vénérable M. Thibault et le colonel de Salaberry, suivis de près par Donald A. Smith, aujourd'hui Lord Strathcona.

Les deux premiers n'avaient pas de mission spéciale. Ils venaient seulement comme amis des métis, et dans le dessein de les rassurer sur les intentions du Canada. Mais ils s'aperçurent bien vite que leurs discours étaient inutiles, et ils n'en firent guère, je vous l'assure.

L'autre avait quelque pouvoir, et il était porteur de documents. C'est lui qui faillit mettre le feu aux poudres.

Donald Smith n'était pas seulement un vieux roué, il appartenait aussi à la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, dont il devint gouverneur peu après, s'il ne l'était pas déjà à cette époque. Comme tel, il avait beaucoup d'influence sur les vieux colons qui furent en si grand nombre au service de la Compagnie.

Tout confiné qu'il était chez le gouverneur Mactavish, et bien que surveillé de près par Riel, il parvint à nouer des intrigues. Il essaya de détacher le plus de métis possible à la cause populaire, et il employa pour cela les moyens qui réussissent si souvent auprès des âmes faibles, même quand elles ne sont pas vénales : l'argent, dont il ne manquait pas. C'est alors que l'on reconnut les vrais patriotes, et les hommes bien trempés. Mais j'anticipe quelque peu.

Plusieurs jours s'étant passés, sans qu'il pût communiquer avec le peuple comme il l'aurait voulu, le commissaire canadien demanda à Riel la permission de produire sa lettre de créance et ses autres documents. Mais comme ses papiers avaient été laissés à Pembina, à la garde de M. Provencher, il fallut les envoyer chercher.

M. Hardisty, un bourgeois de la compagnie, fut chargé de ce soin, accompagné de deux soldats de Riel.

En même temps le vieux Smith avait embauché trois métis qui jusque-là n'avaient joint les autres, sans êtres hostiles cependant, afin d'aller à la rencontre de M. H. Hardisty, de peur que les papiers ne tombassent entre les mains de Riel. Ces métis étaient Pierre Léveillé, John Grant et Angus McKay.

Effectivement, Riel s'était lui-même porté en avant jusqu'à St-Norbert, et aurait désiré avoir ces fameux papiers pour savoir ce qu'ils contenaient réellement.

Lorsque les deux partis se rencontrèrent, il faillit y avoir effusion de sang. Léveillé pointa son pistolet sur Riel, et il aurait fait feu si Grant ne l'eût retenu.

Hardisty garda donc les documents et les remit à M. Smith. Mais l'excitation était grande dans le Fort en voyant que Riel n'était pas venu à bout de son dessein. C'était un échec humiliant pour nous, et peu s'en fallut que nos adversaires payassent cher leur résistance.

La modération cependant reprit le dessus, mais un sourd ressentiment bouillonnait au fond des coeurs, et il ne fallait pas grand'chose pour le faire éclater.

Enfin la grande assemblée du 19 janvier arriva, assemblée qu'on pourrait appeler monstre, eu égard à la faiblesse de notre population. Elle était convoquée pour entendre lire et expliquer les maudits papiers.

De bonne heure le matin, des voitures chargées de monde arrivaient de tous côtés, et certainement il y aurait foule compacte, et qui savait ce qui pouvait arriver ! Mais Riel avait pris ses précautions, et il avait doublé le nombre de ses soldats.

Lorsqu'on entre dans le Fort par le porte du Sud faisant face à l'Assiniboine, on se trouve dans un grand espace vide au fond duquel se trouve en travers une grande maison qui est la résidence du bourgeois et des commis. De chaque côté, de grands hangars sur la gauche, et le magasin pour le public à droite. Au milieu de la maison, monte un escalier surmonté d'une grande plate-forme ou galerie.

Plus loin, au nord, et vers le milieu du fort, se trouvent d'autres bâtiments, entres autres, au centre, une autre assez grande maison à deux étages qu'on appelait " l'office " et où se trouvaient les bureaux de la Compagnie.

C'est ici que Schultz a été enfermé et d'où il s'est évadé. C'est ici également que Scott se trouvait et d'où on l'a fait sortir pour aller le fusiller.

Plus loin encore, et presque au fond de l'enceinte, mais séparée du reste par une haute palissade, se trouvait la résidence du gouverneur Mactavish, avec d'autres résidences pour son service ou les serviteurs. Les gens du dehors, qui avaient affaire au gouverneur se servaient généralement de la porte du Nord — celle dont on a conservé une relique jusqu'à ce jour — pour aller chez lui. Mais, c'était plutôt un passage réservé, et le plus souvent la grande porte était fermée. Venons maintenant à l'assemblée.

(A Suivre)

*Mardi 27 février, 1912, No. 52, p. 4.*

C'est dans le premier espace vide que j'ai mentionné que se tenait le gros public, et les gros bonnets étaient sur la galerie. Parmi ces derniers, outre Donald Smith, Riel, et d'autres, on voyait l'évêque anglicain et le curé de St-Norbert, M. Ritchot.

Les métis s'étaient placés sur la droite, le long du magasin et plus loin jusqu'à leurs casernes et la petite porte de l'Est, en même temps qu'ils s'étendaient sur la façade de la maison jusqu'au pied de l'escalier sans se mêler aux Anglais.

Le temps s'écoulait, et on paraissait n'en venir à aucune solution. Des signes d'impatience se manifestaient parmi les spectateurs, et certains va-et-vient, et des propos presque courroucés que j'entendais du côté des métis, n'annonçaient rien de bon.

Finalement, M. Bannatyne, croyant remarquer un commencement de tumulte, propose à très-haute voix que quarante délégués, moitié anglais et moitié français

se réuniraient le 25 janvier pour délibérer sur les moyens à prendre afin d'en arriver à une solution avantageuse au pays.

La proposition fut acceptée d'emblée, et tout le monde se retira assez content, et heureux surtout que tout se fut passé sans incident fâcheux.

Vers ce temps-là Schultz s'évada.

Il était parvenu à tromper la vigilance de ses gardiens, et, ayant ouvert une croisée, il se laissa descendre de là au moyen d'une corde qu'il s'était taillée à même sa robe de bison.

Vers ce temps-là aussi nous arriva de France un jeune officier, le capitaine Gay. Son amour des aventures lui avait fait traverser les mers et les prairies dans cette saison rigoureuse. Il était de Nice, et il avait été quelque temps au service de Garibaldi.

Il fut bien accueilli, et Riel trouva à l'occuper. Il le nomma même colonel quelques semaines plus tard, titre qui lui fut confirmé par le gouvernement français pendant la guerre franco-prussienne. C'était un joyeux compagnon et nous fûmes bientôt les deux inséparables.

D'autres recrues nous arrivèrent également de Pembina et de St. Joe, entre autres mes anciens compagnons du Lac Du Diable, Gariépy et Poitras.

Il fut question pendant quelque temps de m'envoyer, avec ces derniers, faire une visite aux métis de l'Ouest, Qu'Appelle, Batoche et ailleurs pour les renseigner et obtenir leurs concours dans l'oeuvre que nous poursuivions. Mais ce plan dut être abandonné à cause de diverses circonstances, et je me contentai de leur envoyer, sous forme de manifeste, une longue lettre que je fis en collaboration avec mon ami Gay.

Je viens maintenant à la convention des quarante délégués, le 25 janvier. On l'appelle : la " Grande Convention " pour ne pas la confondre avec celle du 16 novembre.

Elle fut présidée par le juge Black ; William Coldwell et moi-même en étions les secrétaires conjoints. Coldwell stenographiait les discours pour les publier dans le " New Nation ", journal qui venait d'être fondé à Winnipeg dans l'intérêt du Gouvernement Provisoire.

Du côté des Anglais, la discussion se faisait principalement par James Ross, Tom Bunn et quelques autres, et du côté français, par Riel et O'Donoghue.

Le fait le plus notoire de ces débats, et dont j'ai surtout gardé l'impression, c'est la timidité des Anglais dans leurs réclamations auprès du Canada. Ils trouvaient presque toutes nos demandes excessives, et il était souvent impatientant pour nous de faire tant d'efforts pour leur démontrer la légitimité et la justice de nos demandes. Ils ont été bien heureux pourtant, dans la suite, de jouir de ce que nous avons pu obtenir, et ils sont plus exigeants aujourd'hui dans leurs revendications auprès du gouvernement central.

Enfin nos travaux prirent fin après plusieurs jours de délibération. Nous avions dressé une liste des conditions de notre annexion au Canada, que les Anglais appelèrent " Bill of Rights ", et à l'issue de nos séances nous fûmes venir

le commissaire Canadien pour la lui soumettre. Presqu'à chaque demande il répondait " Je pense que le gouvernement vous accordera cela."

Il nous proposa ensuite d'envoyer des délégués à Ottawa pour présenter nos demandes et traiter de notre entrée dans la Confédération. Il paierait lui-même les frais de voyage de ces délégués. Nous acceptâmes [ses] propositions et [les] mîmes peu après à exécution.

Le premier bon résultat de la Convention, après notre entente sur le conditions à faire au Canada, fut la réorganisation du gouvernement provisoire avec l'assentiment et la coopération des délégués anglais. Ceux-ci avaient d'abord envoyé une délégation au gouverneur Mactavish pour avoir son sentiment là-dessus. Il lui avait répondu : " Pour l'amour de Dieu formez un gouvernement et rétablissez la paix."

Le nouveau gouvernement était composé comme suit :

PRÉSIDENT : Louis Riel, TRÉSORIER : W. B. O'Donoghue, SECRÉTAIRE d'ÉTAT : Thomas Bunn, ASSISTANT SECRÉTAIRE d'ÉTAT : Louis Schmidt, ADJUTANT GENERAL : Ambroise Lépine, MAÎTRE DES POSTES : A. G. B. Bannatyne, JUGE EN CHEF : James Ross.

La soirée qui suivait cette heureuse issue en fut une d'allégresse et de réjouissance. Des feux de joie furent allumés, et ce fut un des rares bons moments qu'on passe dans le Fort.

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 4 avril, 1912, No. 5, p. 3.*

M. Bunn prit des alors sa résidence au milieu de nous comme représentant des Anglais dans l'exécutif, et on nomma les délégués à envoyer à Ottawa. Ce furent le Juge Black, le Rev. J. N. Ritchot et Alfred Scott.

Mais avant leur départ, il fallut faire face à une nouvelle crise, et à de nouveaux troubles.

Schultz, aussitôt échappé, avait une vengeance à satisfaire, de même que Scott, évadé lui aussi. Le premier dans le bas de la Rivière Rouge, et l'autre au Portage, le foyer le plus turbulent et le plus haineux, se mirent à rassembler des hommes pour venir donner l'assaut au Fort, délivrer les prisonniers et exterminer Riel et ses gens.

Ces deux partis firent leur jonction à l'église, dite du " Milieu " de la paroisse St-Paul, à une dizaine de milles de nous. Ils nous envoyèrent de là une sorte d'*ultimatum*. Un de leurs envoyés était Thomas Norquay, le frère de John qui fut célèbre plus tard. C'était le 16 février.

Une grande animation régnait parmi nous, comme bien on pense, et tous les préparatifs étaient faits pour repousser une attaque. Nous avions mis des hommes à l'évêché, d'où la première agression pouvait se faire, à cause du bois qui partant de cet endroit jusqu'aux établissements anglais à l'est de la rivière, cacherait les mouvements de l'ennemi et son approche.



Riel répondit à la lettre des anglais d'une manière ferme et sans tergiversations :  
" Nous ne voulons pas la guerre, mais si vous la voulez absolument, vous l'aurez. Nous sommes prêts. Nous délivrerons les prisonniers quand nous le jugerons à propos."

Telle fut la substance de sa réponse.

Mais l'ennemi n'attaqua pas. Il se dispersa, au contraire.

Le lendemain dans la matinée, on vit passer une partie des hommes du Portage dans la prairie, en arrière de Winnipeg. Nos hommes, furieux de cette longue nuit passée dans l'attente et l'anxiété, partirent à leur rencontre, Lépine en tête comme toujours. Ils les firent tous prisonniers. Ils étaient 48 — Scott et le major Boulton étaient parmi eux.

Celui-ci passa devant le conseil militaire et fut condamné à mort, mais il fut gracié peu après, par l'intercession du clergé et d'autres personnages influents, bien disposés envers le Gouvernement Provisoire.

Mais l'autre, Scott, qui ne montrait pas les mêmes bonnes dispositions, et, au contraire, agissait en toute occasion comme un véritable énergumène, fut fusillé le 4 mars. Toute intervention en sa faveur fut inutile. — Il fallait d'ailleurs donner un exemple de sévérité, en même temps que de fermeté.

Je ne m'arrêterai pas à essayer de justifier cette exécution, dont le peuple d'Ontario s'est servi pendant si longtemps pour soulever les préjugés et la haine, non seulement contre les métis mais contre tout ce qui était français et catholique. Je crois qu'aujourd'hui tout homme désintéressé concède que Riel et son gouvernement avaient parfaitement raison d'en agir ainsi. Ce gouvernement était le seul du pays, il avait été établi et reconnu par ses représentants.

N'avait-il pas le droit de mettre à mort comme font tous les gouvernements, ceux qui troublent la paix, et ne cherchent que séditions et massacres?

C'est sur ces entrefaites qu'arriva Mgr. Taché, de Rome, d'où le gouvernement canadien l'avait fait venir. Il était porteur, lui aussi, de lettres et de documents provenant des autorités fédérales. Mais il venait un peu tard, puisque tout était arrangé maintenant dans la colonie.

Cependant une session de l'Assemblée fut convoquée pour entendre Sa Grandeur. Cette assemblée, composée de vingt-huit représentants, tant anglais que français, fut choisie aussitôt après la grande assemblée pour passer les règlements et ordonnances que la situation requerrait. Elle revisa par la suite ceux de l'ancien Conseil de l'Assiniboine, et les remit en force.

Le 15 mars, Mgr. Taché fut invité à exposer ses vues et celles du Canada devant cette assemblée, et en son honneur la moitié des prisonniers furent élargis, tandis que reste le fut aussi quelque temps après.

C'est alors que les délégués partirent pour Ottawa. On va voir que de nouvelles complications nous attendaient à leur occasion.

Mais avant de les raconter, disons que le 9 avril, Riel lança une proclamation, déclarant que tout était revenu à l'état normal dans le pays, que les routes publiques étaient ouvertes à tous, que la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson allait

rouvrir son magasin au public, qu'elle remettait ses billets en circulation comme par le passé à la valeur de l'or. Enfin qu'une amnistie complète était accordée à tous ceux qui voudraient obéir à l'autorité reconnue.

Après cela, presque tous les métis retournèrent dans leurs maisons.

Les hivernants arrivèrent, et firent leurs marchés comme à l'ordinaire avec la Compagnie.

Tout était tranquille enfin, et on respirait à l'aise, après tant de troubles et d'anxiété.

C'est vers ce temps-ci que je mettrai l'incident Pillard, dont j'ai dit un mot plus haut.

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 11 avril, 1912, No. 6, p. 3.*

Les médecins de la colonie, voyant qu'il leur enlevait de la clientèle, et doutant qu'il eût ses diplômes de docteur, demandèrent à Riel de lui faire subir un examen pour s'assurer de ses connaissances médicales.

Les docteurs Cowan, Bird et O'Donnell furent choisis pour faire cette enquête, et comme le capitaine Gay connaissait parfaitement l'anglais, il fut nommé secrétaire de la commission en même temps qu'interprète, car le docteur Pillard ne parlait que le français.

Les commissaires siégèrent dans une des chambres de la maison que nous habitons, aux deuxième étage, et ils ne tinrent qu'une séance. Elle fut même assez courte et n'aboutit à rien.

Pillard ne voulait répondre à aucune de leurs questions. A chacune d'elles il opposait des lazzis ou des injures que l'interprète n'osait traduire à la lettre. Il s'emportait de plus en plus, voulant à la fin jeter tous les commissaires dehors par la fenêtre.

On dut le laisser aller, et il continua de donner ses soins médicaux à ceux qui les demandaient.

Au sortir de cette séance archi-comique, le capitaine Gay s'empessa de venir m'en raconter tous les détails, et rien ne nous égayait tant que de nous rappeler non seulement les sorties de Pillard, mais la mine ahurie et déconfite des graves commissaires. Venons maintenant à des choses plus sérieuses, à nos délégués.

Messieurs Ritchot et Scott étaient partis ensemble quelques jours avant le Juge Black.

Ils apprirent en chemin que les Orangistes de Toronto voulaient leur faire un mauvais parti, les lyncher même lorsqu'ils passeraient dans leur ville. Alors ils changèrent de route sur l'avis des autorités fédérales, et passèrent par Buffalo, d'où un agent de la sûreté les escorta jusqu'à Ottawa. Mais ils furent arrêtés ici, et obligés de subir un procès sommaire comme complices du meurtre de Scott. Ils furent sans doute exonérés et relâchés bien vite, mais l'affront demeurait.

Cette nouvelle nous jeta dans la plus grande indignation, et nous fit présager

le traitement que nous aurions à subir plus tard de la part de ces enrégés d'Ontario.

LOYAUTÉ A L'ANGLETERRE

Les Américains profitèrent de cette circonstance pour renouveler auprès de nous leurs constant efforts, afin de nous faire secouer notre allégeance britannique et nous entraîner dans leur république.

De fortes sommes d'argent furent offertes à Riel, de même que des hommes et des munitions pour repousser les troupes canadiennes, dans le cas où elles voudraient pénétrer malgré nous dans le pays.

Mais Riel tint bon, et ne voulut pas dévier de la voie qu'il s'était tracée dès le commencement. Sa devise était : fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra.

On a prétendu que c'est à Mgr. Taché surtout que l'on doit la conservation de la Rivière Rouge et des autres établissements de l'Ouest. Et Mgr. Ireland disait il y a deux ans, à l'archevêque de St-Boniface : " Sans Mgr. Taché, c'est le drapeau étoilé, et non ' L'Union Jack ' que l'on verrait flotter au-dessus de votre palais ".

C'est une exagération. Sans doute que Mgr. Taché a donné des conseils, et qu'ils ont été écoutés. Mais Sa Grandeur prêchait des convertis.

Et croit-on que ce furent ici les premières sollicitations que nous eûmes des Américains?

Non, non, n'enlevons pas à Riel le mérite qui lui appartient. Cela ne diminue en rien la gloire de Mgr. Taché.

Et puis, sa conduite dix-huit mois plus tard, lors de l'incursion des Fénians après qu'il eût été si odieusement trompé par le gouvernement canadien, persécuté et traqué par tout ce qu'il y avait d'anglais dans le Manitoba, ne montra-t-elle pas sa fidélité inaltérable et même son dévouement à l'Angleterre?

Riel était profondément catholique et la religion nous recommande la fidélité à nos rois.

Cependant nos délégués se mirent aussitôt que possible à conférer avec les ministres d'Ottawa qui avaient spécialement chargé Sir John Macdonald et Sir Geo. Cartier pour s'entendre avec eux, et ils parvinrent après plusieurs jours de délibération à obtenir ce que nous avions demandé. De cet arrangement sortit l'" Acte de Manitoba " sanctionné le 3 mai, et qui devint alors la charte de nos droits.

Restait cependant l'approbation du gouvernement provisoire.

Aussitôt son arrivée, M. Ritchot vint rendre compte de sa mission. Je ne sais pas ce qu'étaient devenus les autres délégués. L'Assemblée Législative avait été convoquée pour l'entendre, et lorsque cela fut fait je proposai (sur l'invitation de mon ancien communal, par un petit billet qu'il me fit passer sous main) je proposai, secondé par Tom Bunn, que les arrangements conclus par nos délégués étaient approuvés par l'Assemblée, et que la colonie de la Rivière Rouge entrait dans la Confédération Canadienne sous le nom de la Province de Manitoba.

Cette motion fut emportée au milieu des applaudissements de toute la salle. Puis des compliments et des remerciements bien sincères furent décernés au curé

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de St-Norbert et à ses co-délégués et tout le monde se retira content, car notre oeuvre était en partie terminée.

(A Suivre)

*Jeudi 18 avril, 1912, No. 7, p. 3.*

Sir Geo. Cartier avait demandé à Riel, par M. Ritchot, qu'il voulait bien continuer à gouverner le pays jusqu'à l'arrivée des autorités canadiennes, et c'est ce qu'il fit jusqu'à [au] 23 août.

Avant d'arriver à ce jour néfaste, laissez-moi dire un mot de mon ami le capitaine Gay.

Aussitôt que la déclaration de guerre entre la France et la Prusse fut parvenue à ses oreilles, il partit sans perdre une minute. Ce petit diable d'homme ne rêvait que guerre et batailles. Plusieurs mois plus tard, il m'écrivait de Tours, que la paix, la triste paix était faite et son titre de colonel, donné par Riel, avait été ratifié par la République Française.

Je vais maintenant aborder un sujet que je n'ai pas encore touché, et qui va être l'objet de bien des démarches, des pourparlers et des déceptions. Je veux parler de l'amnistie.

C'était une condition *sine qua non* de notre entrée dans la Confédération, et elle avait été promise, mais de vive voix seulement, d'abord à Mgr. Taché, puis à nos délégués. On avait dit à ceux-ci : "C'est chose entendue et déjà réglée à Londres. Vous aller trouver chez vous à votre arrivée, les papiers officiels accordant l'amnistie : ces papiers sont déjà en route."

C'est sur ces promesses formelles que tout le monde se fit prendre, et, comme dit l'abbé Dugas, "on peut se faire prendre à moins que cela."

A proprement parler, et, si nous avions eu affaire à un gouvernement fort et honnête, nous n'avions pas besoin de cette amnistie. On n'amnistie que les coupables, et nous ne l'étions pas. Mais c'était une sauvegarde contre les entreprises de nos ennemis qui ne manqueraient pas d'assaillir et d'importuner les tribunaux à notre sujet.

M. Ritchot ne fut pas sitôt rendu, que Mgr. Taché, ne le voyant nanti comme lui que de promesses verbales, partait pour Ottawa. Hélas ! pauvre évêque, ce voyage comme bien d'autres encore seront inutiles, et ne serviront qu'à lui causer des déboires et des angoisses morales sans nombre. On l'accusera de manquer de parole, d'avoir été de connivence avec le gouvernement canadien pour tromper son peuple.

Les ministres ne pourront pas accorder l'amnistie, ils en seront empêchés par le fanatisme ontarien, ce même fanatisme qui fera exécuter Riel en 1885, et qui nous ôtera nos écoles catholiques en 1905.

Mgr. Taché arriva donc sans elle, comme nous le redoutions, et les troupes de Wolseley étant sur le point d'arriver, accompagnée d'une bande de fanatiques, nous avions pris nos mesures pour ne pas être surpris dans le Fort.



## ARRIVÉE DES TROUPES CANADIENNES

Le matin du 23 août par un temps pluvieux, un ancien bourgeois de la Compagnie, M. Stuart, arriva dans le Fort à course de cheval, pour nous prévenir que Wolseley était proche. Alors Riel et O'Donoghue traversèrent à St-Boniface et de là prirent le chemin de Pembina.

J'avais couché chez moi cette nuit-là, et venant aux nouvelles de bonne heure le matin, je fus informé par le passeur de l'Assiniboine, M. Dougall, que je n'avais même pas le temps d'aller chercher les quelques effets qui me restaient dans le Fort. En effet, peu après, je vis les capots rouges contourner le bastion du Sud-Est, et je tournai bride sans tarder.

Le gouverneur Archibald n'arriva que quelques jours après par la voie des Etats-Unis.

Ainsi tout tournait mal, et contrairement à ce qui nous avait été promis. Le Canada allait agir en traître jusqu'au bout, et d'une façon indigne d'un peuple civilisé. Mais l'histoire lui tiendra compte de la conduite louche, tergiversante et enfin traîtresse qu'il a tenue pendant le cours de ces troubles, que je vais maintenant clore sur cette réflexion.

## XXV : CIRCULAIRE AUX HABITANTS DU NORD ET DU NORD-OUEST

Maison du Gouvernement Provisoire,  
Fort Garry, 7 Avril, 1870

Concitoyens, —

Vous n'ignorez sans doute ni la suite des événements qui se sont succédés à la Rivière Rouge, et qui ont passé à l'état des faits accomplis, ni les causes qui les ont amenés.

Vous savez comment on a arrêté et reconduit à la frontière un Gouverneur que le Canada — cette autre colonie anglaise, — ignorant nos aspirations et notre existence comme peuple, oubliant le droit des gens et nos droits de sujets anglais, voulait nous imposer, sans nous consulter et sans même nous avertir.

Vous savez aussi que, ayant été abandonnés par notre propre Gouvernement qui avait vendu ses titres sur ce pays, nous vîmes la nécessité de nous rassembler en Conseil et de reconnaître l'autorité d'un Gouvernement Provisoire, qui fut proclamé le 24 Novembre, 1869.

Après bien des difficultés qui lui suscitèrent les partisans du Canada et de la Compagnie de la Baie-d'Hudson, ce Gouvernement Provisoire est aujourd'hui maître de la situation, parce que toutes les populations de la Colonie ont ressenti la nécessité de l'union et de la concorde, parce que nous avons toujours professé notre nationalité de sujets anglais, et parce que notre armée, bien que peu nombreuse, a toujours suffi à tenir haut élevé le noble étendard de la liberté et de la patrie.

Non seulement le Gouvernement Provisoire a réussi à ramener l'ordre et à pacifier le pays, mais il a entrepris des négociations très-avantageuses auprès du Gouvernement Canadien, et de la Compagnie de la Baie-d'Hudson ; vous serez tenus au courant des résultats de ces négociations.

Peuples du Nord et du Nord-Ouest, vous n'avez été étrangers ni à la cause pour laquelle nous ayons combattu, ni à nos affections, c'est la distance et non point l'oubli qui nous ont séparés.

Vos frères de la Rivière-Rouge, en travaillant à la mission que Dieu leur impose, sentent bien qu'ils n'agissent point pour eux seuls, et que si leur position leur a donné la gloire de triompher, la victoire n'aura de prix qu'autant que vous partagerez leur joie et leur liberté ; la conquête de leurs droits n'aura de valeur à leurs yeux, que si vous les revendiquez avec eux.

Nous possédons aujourd'hui sans partage presque la moitié d'un continent ; l'expulsion ou l'anéantissement des envahisseurs vient de rendre notre terre natale à ses enfants. Disseminés dans cette vaste et riche contrée, mais unis comme un seul homme, que nous importe la distance puisque nous sommes tous des frères et qu'il s'agit du bien commun ?

Reconnu par toutes les classes du peuple, le gouvernement repose sur la bonne volonté et l'union des citoyens.

Son devoir en vous faisant connaître d'une manière officielle les changements politiques qui se sont effectués parmi nous, est de vous rassurer sur l'avenir ; son espérance est que les peuples du Nord se montreront dignes de leur frères de la Rivière-Rouge.

Cependant le Gouvernement craint que, faute de bien comprendre ses vues, les peuples du Nord et du Nord-Ouest, influencés par des étrangers mal intentionnés, ne commettent des excès capables de compromettre la sûreté publique. C'est pourquoi le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire ne croit pas mieux faire que de s'adresser à tous ceux qui aiment le bien public et la prospérité de leur pays, pour les engager à faire connaître et comprendre, à ceux des métis et des sauvages qui seraient portés à vouloir profiter de ce prétendu temps de désordre pour fomenter des troubles, que le véritable état de la chose publique est l'ordre et la paix.

Le Gouvernement, établi sur la justice et la raison ne permettra jamais que des désordres se commettent, et ceux qui s'en rendront coupables ne pourront être laissé impunis. Il ne faut pas que quelques méchants compromettent les intérêts de tout un peuple.

Peuples du Nord et du Nord-Ouest, ce message est un message de paix.

Assez longtemps la guerre a menacé la colonie ; assez longtemps nous avons été en armes pour sauvegarder le pays et ramener l'ordre, troublé par des malfaiteurs et des scélérats.

Notre pays, si heureusement entouré par la Providence de barrières naturelles et presque infranchissables, nous appelle à l'union.

Après la crise par où nous avons passé tous sentent plus que jamais qu'ils

recherchent les mêmes intérêts, qu'ils aspirent aux mêmes droits, qu'ils sont membres d'une seule et même famille.

Nous espérons que vous aussi sentirez le besoin de vous rallier autour du Gouvernement Provisoire pour le seconder et l'appuyer dans son oeuvre.

Par ordre du Président

Louis Schmidt

Asst. Secr. d'Etat

#### XXVI : PROTESTATION DES PEUPLES DU NORD-OUEST

Le present état d'excitation contre nous en certaines parties du Canada [amended in script : " De certains partis canadiens contre nous "] nous fournit une belle occasion de montrer la différence de leurs principes et des nôtres. Est-ce que tant de journaux Canadiens et tant de personnes qui les approuvent s'exercent contre nous simplement et sincèrement dans l'intérêt de la Confédération? Est-ce dans l'intérêt de l'Angleterre? S'il en est ainsi, comment se fait-il que Snow, Dennis, McDougall, et tant d'autres objets de sympathie principalement en Haut-Canada, aient pris des voies assez détournées, et aient assez cherché à tromper le peuple pour le jeter dans un mécontentement aussi grand que général? Les hommes du Haut-Canada, avec lesquels nous avons évité toutes sortes de mêlée durant les derniers six mois, ont cherché à nous diviser, à nous surexciter les uns contre les autres, à nous amener dans l'horrible collision d'une guerre civile ! La guerre civile n'a-t-elle pas été proclamée au milieu de nous? Et ceux qui l'ont osé, n'auraient-ils pas usurpé d'une manière infâme le nom de sa Majesté? Tant d'étrangers que nous avons été contraints, à différentes époques, de faire prisonniers n'ont-ils pas été remis généreusement en liberté, lorsque nous savions qu'ils se hâteraient de faire contre nous le mal qu'ils soulevaient aujourd'hui dans le Haut-Canada, en se parjurant? Et parceque l'un de ceux qui par obstination continua à troubler la paix publique qu'eux seuls ont compromise au milieu de nous, et que nous faisons tant d'efforts pour maintenir dans le Nord-Ouest, nous a forcé à faire de lui un exemple que d'autres pussent apprendre, ils veulent nous déclarer la guerre, pendant que Sir John A. McDonald [*sic*], le Premier est obligé de dire en justice que le Canada n'a pas de juridiction dans ce pays. Non, ces gens-là n'ont pas travaillé et ne travaillent pas dans l'intérêt de l'Angleterre ! Ils ne s'occupent de la Confédération qu'autant qu'ils la croient nécessaire à la réussite de leurs plans, dont l'objet est trop personnel et trop exclusif pour être juste ! Ces personnes par un grand manque d'honnêteté et de loyauté ont ambitionné sur nous une supériorité tout-à-fait condamnable, par ce que pour l'obtenir, ces faux sujets Anglais [*sic*] n'ont voulu et ne veulent respecter les droits de personne dans une colonie Anglaise. Ils se sont flattés du coupable espoir de pouvoir associer leurs projets égoïstes avec ceux de la politique impériale pour l'Amérique Britannique du Nord. C'est une chose qu'ils ont oubliée : la

politique d'un gouvernement ayant à s'occuper des intérêts générales de la société, sans distinction de langage, d'origine, sans distinction de croyance est toujours incompatible avec les vues étroites de l'intérêt individuel, lorsque celui-ci, au lieu d'en imposer à l'autre ne lui est pas entièrement subordonné. Ils auraient du le savoir : le seul moyen d'assurer l'existence et l'extension de la Confédération est de placer sur un pied égal et libéral les Provinces de l'Amérique Britannique du Nord. S'il est vrai que la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson a négligé l'avancement politique de ce pays, le peuple, lui, aussitôt qu'il a pu, a du agir. Il s'est formé un gouvernement, et ce gouvernement qui se dit lui-même provisoire ne veut pas que le Nord-Ouest entre dans la Confédération, avant que dans ce pays aussi toutes les classes des hommes civilisés n'aient reçu la garantie d'être sur un même noble pied d'égalité.

Dans le mois d'octobre dernier, lorsque les premiers représentants du peuple de la Rivière-Rouge se sont d'abord publiquement assemblés pour prendre, au nom de leurs constituants, le titre et les fonctions de " Protecteurs des droits du peuple", ils déclarèrent : —

1. Qu'ils étaient sujets loyaux de sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre.
2. Qu'ils étaient redevables à la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson du bien qu'ils pouvaient avoir reçu sous son gouvernement, quelle que fût la nature de ce gouvernement.
3. Que la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson se retirant du gouvernement de ce pays, ils étaient prêts à passer par ce changement-là. Mais en même temps s'étant établi, ayant vécu sur ces terres qu'il a aidé la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson à ouvrir, le peuple de la Rivière-Rouge, ayant acquis de cette façon des droits incontestables dans ce pays, proclamait hautement ces droits.
4. Que le peuple de la Rivière-Rouge ayant jusqu'à ce temps maintenu et supporté le gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, sous a couronne d'Angleterre, Snow et Dennis ont méconnu le droit des gens en venant établir ici des travaux au nom d'une autorité étrangère sans payer le respect du à l'autorité alors existante dans le pays.
5. La Colonie de la Rivière-Rouge ayant toujours été soumise à la couronne d'Angleterre, s'étant développée à part, à travers toutes les chances de sa situation, ces représentants déclarèrent au nom de leurs constituants, qu'ils feraient tout en leur pouvoir pour faire respecter en leur faveur toutes les prérogatives si libéralement accordées par la couronne d'Angleterre à n'importe quelle colonie Anglaise.

Ces principes ont été publiés en Canada dans le mois de Novembre dernier. Ils sont encore comme ils étaient alors la ligne de conduite du gouvernement Provisoire. Le drapeau Anglais qui flotte sur nos têtes rendra donc aux yeux du monde ce grand témoignage en notre faveur. Pleins de confiance en ces principes qui font notre force, nous ne trouvons pas qu'ils soient sujets loyaux de sa Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre ceux qui ont voulu nous faire la guerre jusqu'ici, et qui voudraient encore nous la faire à cause de la conduite que nous avons tenue sur ces



résolutions. Pour nous ruiner, et afin de s'élever sur nos ruines, ils nous ont toujours comptés au rang des barbares. Cependant nos grandes difficultés ne nous ont jamais fait appeler à notre secours le dangereux élément des tribus sauvages. Au contraire, tandis que nous n'épargnons rien pour les maintenir dans le calme, eux autres viennent d'envoyer à travers notre pays où leur gouvernement n'a pas de juridiction, des émissaires dans le but criminel de nous créer des ennemis parmi les Indiens. Mais nous espérons que la Providence nous aidera à compléter la pacification du Nord-Ouest ; nous espérons que l'autorité de la couronne d'Angleterre facilitera le dénouement des grandes complications qui ont été causées par une grande impudence politique.

Notre cause est celle d'une Colonie anglaise ! Notre cause est celle de la liberté ! Dieu, le monde, savent combien nous avons été outragés.

Des peuples que le progrès et la civilisation remplissent d'ambition d'un côté nous environnent et de l'autre de nombreuses nations sauvages qui vivent dans l'attente et l'appréhension. Le peuple de la Rivière-Rouge est né de ces deux grands divisions pour leur servir d'intermédiaire. En effet nous sommes liés avec les deux par le sang et les habitudes.

La Province d'Ontario en arrêtant nos délégués, que le Gouvernement Fédéral avait invités par trois commissions spéciales, vient de faire un acte contre lequel nous protestons au nom de tous les peuples du Nord-Ouest. Nous dénonçons l'opprobre d'une pareille démarche à tous les peuples civilisés ; nous en appelons au droit des gens que le Haut-Canada a toujours méconnu, quand il s'est agi de nous, que le Gouvernement Fédéral ne s'est pas fait honneur de protéger, mais que nous réclamons devant Dieu et devant les hommes de toutes les manières qui nous sont possibles et de toutes les manières qui nous seront possibles.

LOUIS RIEL

Président

[*In script*] Maison du Gouvernement Provisoire,  
Fort Garry le 14 Mai, 1870

# XXVII : MÉMOIRE HISTORIQUE DU NORD-OUEST PAR LOUIS RIEL

22 Janvier, 1874

E. P. Lachapelle, M.D.,  
132 rue St. Laurent,  
Montréal

A.M.D.G.

1 A.

Les territoires du Nord ouest ont été transférés au Canada seulement le 15 Juillet 1870. Mais le gouvernement canadien fit commencer, en 68-69, des travaux publics en son nom dans la terre de Rupert et le nord ouest, sans l'autorisation du gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson. L'arrivée des agents canadiens, dans ce pays, fut signalée par le mépris qu'ils

affectèrent pour l'autorité de la Compagnie elle-même et pour les anciens colons. Ils cherchèrent à s'emparer des plus belles propriétés des Métis, surtout à la Pointe de Chênes, paroisse établie à 30 milles environ à l'est du Fort Garry. Ils prétendirent acheter ces propriétés des sauvages. Et pour se fortifier dans ce commencement de lutte contre nous, ils tentèrent une alliance avec les Indiens, et leur vendirent, afin de se les attacher, des liqueurs enivrantes contrairement à la loi ! D'ailleurs le surintendant des travaux canadiens à la Pointe de Chênes, Monsieur Snow et aussi ses subalternes se conduisaient fort mal : ils faillirent en certaines circonstances s'entr'assassiner. L'un des employés, Th. Scott qui fut plus tard exécuté porta un pistolet à la figure de son maître et s'en étant saisi avec une bande d'hommes effrénés comme lui, il le traîna à la Rivière pour l'en faire périr. Des Métis sauvèrent le surintendant des mains de ses employés qui étaient en grand nombre d'Ontario. On conçoit qu'en agissant ainsi, ces étrangers donnèrent aux habitants du pays une idée qui ne leur fut pas favorable.

Les autorités de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson furent obligées de sévir contre leurs désordres. Et elles protestèrent contre le gouvernement Canadien, moins à cause de la mauvaise conduite de ses employés que pour avoir entrepris en dehors de leur sanction, des travaux publics sur leurs territoires. Après que Monsieur Snow eut commencé les travaux du chemin Dawson entre le Lac des Bois et la Pointe de Chênes, en 68, au nom du Canada, un autre intrus s'était aussi mis, de la même part, à arpenter, dans l'été 69, autour du Fort Garry, les terres publiques et privées, d'après un système nouveau d'arpentage, dérangeant sans explication aucune, l'ordre de choses établies, et troublant sans scrupule les anciens colons dans la possession paisible et légale de leurs terres.

Les protestations du gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson furent bientôt suivies de celles des colons qui s'opposèrent résolument à ce que des hommes aussi suspects ouvrirent des chemins publics, et pratiquassent des arpentages, sur leurs propres terres, au nom d'un gouvernement étranger, avec si peu de garanties [*sic*].

En même temps, Monsieur McDougall se présenta sur les frontières à Pembina. Tout le monde le disait envoyé par le Canada pour nous gouverner. En réalité, il emmenait avec lui, un Conseil tout composé d'hommes que nous ne connaissions pas. Mais comme principal titre à notre respect, un lot considérable de carabines les suivait tout de près.

Les Métis alarmés se formèrent "en comité national", et s'avancèrent au devant de Monsieur McDougall, lui envoyant des courriers exprès pour lui dire de ne pas entrer ainsi dans leur pays. Monsieur McDougall fit une réponse insultante et pleine de dédain. Beaucoup d'aventuriers, qui s'étaient attachés à la remorque de Messieurs Snow et le Colonel Dennis, alors prétendu arpenteur général, et qui s'étaient tous compromis avec eux soit à la Pointe de Chênes, en ouvrant un chemin canadien, soit dans le reste du pays, en y commençant l'arpentage des terres, avaient déjà déclaré qu'ils étaient venus d'Ontario, en avant de Monsieur McDougall, surtout comme soldats, pour lui prêter main

forte contre nous, qu'ils étaient tous décidés à faire entrer et à installer par la force, s'il le fallait, Monsieur McDougall leur gouverneur. Et Monsieur ne fut pas plutôt arrivé à Pembina, que ces aventuriers parlèrent hautement de s'emparer du Fort Garry, le siège de nos affaires publiques.

Au reste, le gouvernement Anglais, le gouvernement de la compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson ne nous avaient annoncé aucun changement. Ni l'un ni l'autre ne nous parlait de Monsieur McDougall, de son Conseil. Monsieur McDougall était donc un envahisseur. Nous le repoussâmes le 1<sup>r</sup> novembre 1869. Et le 3 nous entrâmes dans le Fort Garry et nous nous mîmes à le garder contre les surprises dont il était menacé.

Alors seulement le gouvernement canadien recula devant l'oeuvre d'agitation causée par ses empiètements et par les méfaits de ses employés. Il demanda à l'Angleterre de différer l'époque du transfert, insinuant que la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson n'avait pas agi loyalement à son égard, vu qu'en vendant tous ses droits de charte au Canada, elle ne l'avait pas averti des troubles qui agitaient son territoire.

Mais Lord Granville marqua bien le rôle prématuré que le gouvernement Canadien avait commencé à jouer dans le nord ouest. Le 30 novembre 1869, il dit au gouverneur général que les troubles surgis dans ces territoires étaient dus à la conduite même du gouvernement Canadien.

En conséquence de tous ces faits, et depuis que les autorités impériales ont jugé à propos de reprimander ainsi le cabinet d'Ottawa, il a toujours paru étrange au peuple d'Assiniboia de s'entendre, dans les documents officiels et autres du Canada, qualifiés de population rebelle et égarée, sur l'alléguation que nous n'avions pas voulu nous soumettre aux procédés arbitraires du gouvernement Canadien.

A la date du 17 novembre 1869, et les jours suivants, les prétendus amis du Canada à Winnipeg avaient écrit à Monsieur McDougall séjournant à Pembina, pour le déterminer à proclamer sans délai le transfert des territoires du Nord Ouest au gouvernement Canadien. Ils ne se préoccupaient pas que la Reine eût opéré ou non ce transfert. Ce qu'ils voulaient c'était le renversement au plus tôt du gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson et faire venir, par n'importe quels moyens, celui de Monsieur McDougall.

Le 16 novembre, le comité national des Métis avait réuni au Fort Garry, dans la maison de la Cour, de toutes les partis du pays une convention de 24 députés dont 12 parlant l'anglais et 12 parlant le français. Le but de cette convention était de s'entendre sur les mesures à prendre pour sauvegarder les intérêts des colons d'Assiniboia contre les dangers de la situation. Elle avait siégé le 16 et le 17 Novembre. Mais le 18 étant un jour marqué par le gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson pour tenir les séances trimestrielles de la Cour générale, la convention témoignant tout son respect à l'autorité, prit ajournement jusqu'à ce que la cour eût clos ses procédés. Cependant le comité national des Métis prit ses précautions pour que nos affaires publiques ne tombassent pas, par



une ruse, à la merci d'un prétendu Lieutenant Gouverneur Canadien qui prenait tous ses amis et ses conseils du côté de ceux dont la conduite était ouvertement contraire aux intérêts des Métis et des anciens colons. Le 24 novembre le comité national voulut protéger les livres et les argents publics contre le complot que les amis de Monsieur McDougall tramaient pour s'en emparer le 1<sup>er</sup> Décembre. Il environna ces livres et ces argents d'une forte garde.

Monsieur McDougall se laisse [a] gagner le 1<sup>er</sup> Décembre 1869, et s'arrogea le droit de proclamer l'annexion de la terre de Rupert et du Nord ouest au Canada.

Et notre gouvernement de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, déjà tant affaibli par les violences de la lutte que les amis extravagants du Canada et de ses employés lui faisaient depuis une année surtout, Monsieur McDougall s'arrogea aussi le droit d'en proclamer la déchéance. Il se proclama lui-même gouverneur, et à toutes ces fausses proclamations, il ajouta une proclamation de guerre ouverte contre nous.

Le colonel Dennis, maintenant arpenteur général, reçut de Monsieur McDougall avec sa commission pour nous faire la guerre les titres de Lieutenant et de conservateur de la paix. Ces hommes nous attaquaient injustement, illégalement au nom du gouvernement canadien. Ils ne respiraient que la guerre. . . . Avons-nous fait guerre pour guerre?

Le Dr. Schultz avec une cinquantaine d'hommes armés se trouva bloqué dans sa maison par le comité national des Métis qui avait à ses ordres 800 hommes. Schultz et la plupart de ses 50 partisans avaient été regardés depuis quelques temps par nos autorités comme des perturbateurs de la paix publique. Et ils avaient souvent parlé du projet de chasser les Métis vers les Montagnes Rocheuses, afin de débarrasser les environs du Fort Garry de leur présence. Qu'avons-nous fait de ces hommes, une fois réduits à notre merci? . . . La ville de Winnipeg eut la générosité d'intercéder en leur faveur. Le Comité National des Métis laissa les assiégés libres de se rendre et se contenta de les emprisonner, après leur avoir accordé la vie à tous; c'était le 7 Décembre 1869.

Puis comme nous étions sans gouvernement exposés à l'anarchie, tout préoccupés du soin de veiller à la conservation de nos vies et de nos propriétés, nous proclamâmes le 8 Décembre, la formation et l'autorité d'un gouvernement Provisoire que rencontra de suite l'approbation et le soutien d'une grande partie du peuple. A cause des conjonctures qui le faisaient naître ce gouvernement était légal.

Jugeons de la place qu'il a occupé dans l'estime publique.

8 jours après qu'il eut été proclamé, l'Honorable Conseil Privé pour le Canada jugeant des circonstances disait lui-même que l'existence de ce gouvernement était légale. On peut constater l'authenticité de cette assertion, en lisant le rapport de l'un de ces comités écrit par Sir John A. McDonald [*sic*] lui-même, en date du 16 Décembre 1869, et adressé au bureau des colonies en Angleterre.



Dès le mois de janvier 1870 les commissionnaires canadiens, le Révérend Monsieur J. B. Thibeault et le Colonel de Salaberry reconnurent officiellement notre gouvernement Provisoire : ils s'adressèrent directement à lui pour expliquer au peuple les bonnes intentions que le gouvernement canadien les avait chargés de faire connaître de sa part dans la terre de Rupert et le Nord ouest. Monsieur D. A. Smith parvint, grâce à un travail lent et difficile, à obtenir quelques jours après au Fort Garry une assemblée en masse des habitants du pays. Eu égard à l'effervescence des diverses opinions politiques à ce moment-là, une réunion aussi générale offrait bien des dangers. Mais comme Monsieur D. A. Smith tenait à avoir cette assemblée, d'expliquer lui-même au public, ce qu'il avait à lui communiquer de la part du Canada, le gouvernement Provisoire se prépara à répondre aux exigences de la situation. Monsieur le Président du gouvernement fixa le jour et l'heure où le peuple pourrait se réunir pour entendre Monsieur Smith. L'assemblée eut lieu le 19 Janvier et se continua durant deux jours.

Plusieurs fois la guerre civile fut sur le point d'éclater au milieu de cette foule excitée. Mais chaque fois, grâce à Dieu, les mesures de précaution adoptées par le gouvernement Provisoire réussirent à réprimer tous les désordres.

Monsieur D. A. Smith fut entendu et voici en résumé ce qu'il nous annonça en sa qualité de Commissionnaire Spécial. " Dans la Confédération, nous dit-il, tous les droits civils et religieux des anciens colons seront scrupuleusement respectés. De plus la Reine a mandé à son gouverneur général du Canada, advenant le cas où la paix se rétablirait, selon sa volonté expresse, dans les territoires du nord ouest, de couvrir par un Pardon général tous les troubles qui venaient malheureusement de se manifester dans cette partie de son Empire. En conséquence le gouverneur général du Canada avait formulé une proclamation dans ce sens pour les habitants du nord ouest. Mais constatant que cette Proclamation n'était pas venue à la connaissance du pays, Monsieur Smith le commissionnaire Spécial, nous dit qu'il était autorisé à nous avertir du contenu de cette Proclamation."

A la fin de cette importante assemblée, le Président du gouvernement Provisoire demanda au peuple d'ordonner une convention de 40 Délégués, représentant tout le pays, et chargée de prendre en considération ce que Monsieur D. A. Smith venait de nous dire, et chargée de porter, sur la situation, une décision publique conforme à nos meilleurs intérêts [*sic*]. Le peuple donna une approbation si entière à demande du Président du gouvernement Provisoire, que le 25 Janvier, étant le jour fixé pour cela, les 40 Délégués, après avoir été élus par le peuple, se réunissaient à la maison de la Cour au Fort Garry, afin de remplir leur mission.

Le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire nomma lui-même un Président à cette Convention. Et elle discuta pendant de quinze jours les conditions de notre entrée dans la Confédération. Elle invita le Révérend J. B. Thibeault, le colonel de Salaberry, et Monsieur D. A. Smith, à assister à une de ses séances,

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afin de recevoir officiellement les communications du gouvernement Canadien par ces trois messieurs. Ils s'y rendirent tous les trois. Monsieur Thibeault et de Salaberry dirent qu'ils étaient commissionnés de nous assurer de le part du Canada que son gouvernement n'avait qu'un dessein : celui de nous gouverner en respectant tous nos droits et en administrant les affaires du pays pour la plus grande prospérité de tous ses habitants. Monsieur D. A. Smith réitéra ce que déjà il nous avait dit dans la grande assemblée qui avait eu lieu au Fort Garry.

Avant de prendre congé de la Convention ces trois messieurs invitèrent, au nom du Canada, le peuple de la terre de Rupert et du Nord Ouest, à envoyer des délégués à Ottawa pour en venir à une entente amicale. Et au nom de leur gouvernement ils promirent une réception cordiale à nos délégués.

L'invitation ainsi faite au peuple fut acceptée par la Convention au nom du peuple.

Le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire ayant, après cela fait observer à la convention le périlleux état où nous avaient plongés les usurpations de Monsieur McDougall, et ayant attiré son attention sur la nécessité où nous étions, pour dompter l'anarchie, d'affermir le gouvernement Provisoire qu'une moitié des colons avait proclamé le 8 Décembre 1869, mais auquel l'autre moitié n'avait pas encore donné son adhésion ; et lui ayant fait considérer que ce gouvernement réclamait l'appui des citoyens non seulement pour maintenir efficacement la paix, mais encore pour traiter convenablement avec le Canada, la Convention consolida par le consentement unanime de tout le peuple qu'elle représentait, l'établissement du gouvernement Provisoire. Et par un vote Spécial, sur les quarante plus que trente de ses membres confirmèrent dans la position de Président du gouvernement celui qui, après Monsieur John Bruce avait occupé cette charge depuis le 27 Décembre 1869.

Monsieur le Juge Black avait jusque là présidé aux délibérations de la convention. Mais immédiatement après ce vote, sur le désir de la convention elle-même, il céda son siège au Président du gouvernement Provisoire, qui, sur le champ, nomma Monsieur le Juge Black, le Révérend Monsieur Ritchot et Alfred H. Scott, délégués à Ottawa, félicita la convention de son Patriotisme, la dissout et la congédia.

Le lendemain 12 Février, Le Secrétaire d'Etat du gouvernement Provisoire écrivait au Révérend curé de St. Norbert, la lettre officielle suivante.

Fort Garry, 12 Février, 1870.  
Révérend J. N. Ritchot,  
à St. Norbert, G.R.R.

Révérend Monsieur,

Je suis chargé de vous informer que vous avez été nommé par le Président des territoires du Nord Ouest, comme co-commissionnaire, avec John Black et Alfred

H. Scott écuyers, pour traiter avec le gouvernement de la Puissance du Canada les termes d'entrer dans la Confédération.

Je suis,

Révérènd Monsieur,

Votre obéissant serviteur,

Thos. Bunn,

Secrétaire.

A peine avait-on commencé à respirer la tranquillité, 2 fois 24 heures ne s'étaient pas encore écoulées que les partisans du Dr. Schultz et de Monsieur McDougall firent éclater un soulèvement de 7 ou 8 cents hommes.

On sait que le Dr. Schultz avait été emprisonné le 7 Décembre 1869. Mais durant l'élection, il s'était échappé, le 22 Janvier. Quand il vit qu'il n'avait pu influencer aucune des décisions de la convention il travailla à détruire son oeuvre, en poussant le peuple à renverser le gouvernement Provisoire qu'elle avait achevé d'établir. Ses adhérents se rassemblèrent à St. André, place située sur la Rivière Rouge à 10 mille environ au nord du Fort Garry. Le 14, 15, 16 Février, ils restèrent attroupés là, pêle-mêle avec 2 ou 3 cents sauvages, se disposant à marcher sur le Fort Garry. Dans ce confus assemblage de sauvages et de blancs, il se commit deux meurtres, celui de l'infortuné Sutherland qui n'avait jamais pris aucune part à nos troubles, et celui de Parisien, un des plus chauds partisans du Dr. Schultz et de Monsieur McDougall. Le camp des amis du Dr. Schultz s'était hâté de répandre dans le pays des courriers portant l'ordre de commencer la guerre sur plusieurs points à la fois, afin de forcer les soldats Métis à abandonner le Fort Garry et à secourir leurs familles, espérant ainsi prendre aisément possession de la place du pays le plus considérable.

Le Gouvernement Provisoire arrêta plusieurs de ces courriers. Quand la nature des dépêches dont ces hommes avaient consenti à se charger fut connue des soldats Métis, ceux-ci indignés demandèrent tous, capitaines et soldats, que le plus coupable, William Gaddy qui s'était fait le porteur de pareils ordres dans sa propre patrie, fût sur le champ fusillé. Il fut conduit dans un des bastions du Fort pour y être exécuté.

Cette attitude des Métis, les bon conseils de beaucoup de citoyens marquants et paisibles, et un avertissement que le Président du gouvernement Provisoire adressa lui-même aux révoltés, finirent par en calmer et à en disperser un grand nombre vers le soir du 16 Février [*sic*].

Revenons à William Gaddy. Tout le monde le croyait mort. Il était plein de vie, grâce aux officiers généraux, A. D. Lépine et Elzéar Goulet qui, par leurs soins, n'avaient fait que le soustraire à la verdicte publique, en le faisant passer pour mort dans son obscur bastion.

C'est ainsi que des nobles coeurs, comme A. D. Lépine, maintenant prisonnier politique, à Manitoba, et Elzéar Goulet, qui a été assassiné, en plein jour au milieu de la ville de Winnipeg, et impunément, peu de temps après l'arrivée du



Colonel Wolseley et du Lieutenant gouverneur Canadien dans notre Province, se plaisaient à traiter leurs ennemis.

Dans la matinée du 17 Février, apparut en rase campagne, à deux milles seulement du Fort Garry, une troupe de 48 hommes armés, à la tête desquels se trouvaient plusieurs des principaux conspirateurs, amis du Dr. Schultz. Lépine, Adjudant général, prend avec lui 30 cavaliers et une centaine de piétons, et au lieu de raser cette poignée d'ennemis, il marche droit à eux, leur fait rendre les armes et les emmène captifs en dedans des murs. Il me semble qu c'était une façon généreuse d'exercer les droits de la guerre. La seule vie du Major Boulton, chef de la Bande allait payer pour les autres. Lorsque Monsieur D. A. Smith demanda au Président du gouvernement Provisoire, de lui faire grâce, Le Président répondit que, malgré tout encore, Boulton serait infailliblement épargné si toutes les localités rebelles à l'oeuvre de la convention, voulaient définitivement reconnaître et appuyer le gouvernement Provisoire.

A la suggestion du Président lui-même dont une des premières ambitions était [de] rétablir la paix, sans aucune effusion de sang, Monsieur D. A. Smith parcourut toutes les localités révoltées. Et par son influence d'homme de la compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson et de commissionnaire Spécial du gouvernement canadien, il les détermina toutes à soutenir le gouvernement Provisoire. Boulton fut sauvé !

Comme on le voit, non seulement Monsieur D. A. Smith, employé de la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson et du Canada, a lui-même reconnu notre gouvernement Provisoire. Mais encore il a travaillé à le faire reconnaître et appuyer par tout le pays indistinctement. Cette simple narration des principaux faits accomplis durant nos troubles depuis l'automne de 1868 jusqu'à la dernière partie du mois de Février 1870, jointe au témoignage de Lord Granville, prouve 1<sup>o</sup> que le gouvernement Canadien a provoqué les troubles qui ont éclaté dans les territoires du Nord Ouest, à propos du transfert de ces territoires à la Puissance, par conséquent que la responsabilité de ces troubles retombe sur le gouvernement Canadien.

De cette simple narration il apert 2<sup>o</sup> que ce sont les employés du Canada qui, en anéantissant peu-à-peu, en 69, le gouvernement de la compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, ont forcé les habitants de ces territoires à se pourvoir d'un gouvernement Provisoire dont la légalité est d'autant plus certaine, 1<sup>o</sup> qu'elle ressort du droit des gens 2<sup>o</sup> qu'elle a été admise par l'Honorable Conseil Privé pour le Canada, dans l'un de ses comités, le 16 Décembre 1869. 3<sup>o</sup> Que ce gouvernement Provisoire lui-même a reçu l'appui de tout le pays dont il était, après la couronne, par des circonstances exceptionnelles, devenu la principale sauvegarde. 4<sup>o</sup> Que ce même gouvernement Provisoire a joui de la reconnaissance officielle des trois commissionnaires Canadiens que j'ai l'honneur de mentionner : Messieurs D. A. Smith, le Révérend J. B. Thibeault et le Colonel Salaberry. 5<sup>o</sup> Que ce gouvernement Provisoire a été invité officiellement par le Canada à traiter avec son gouvernement pour arrêter amicalement avec lui les conditions de notre entrée dans la Confédération.



Monsieur D. A. Smith, en sa qualité de commissionnaire Spécial, convint même avec le Président du gouvernement Provisoire, au Fort Garry, que toutes les dépenses publiques nécessitées au gouvernement Provisoire par l'envoi de délégués à Ottawa seraient payées à même le coffre Canadien. Et c'est ce qui a été fait.

Fort de toutes ces garanties [*sic*] et fort surtout de notre continuelle allégeance à la couronne, le gouvernement Provisoire se disposait à faire partir vers la fin de Février ses délégués pour Ottawa, quand de nouveaux désordres absorbèrent son attention.

Le Dr. Schultz n'avait pas un instant cessé de pousser les sauvages à la guerre contre nous. Un grand nombre des habitants du Portage la Prairie le secondent dans cette oeuvre barbare.

Le Portage la Prairie est un établissement placé sur la Rivière Assiniboine à peu près à 60 milles à l'ouest du Fort Garry, et dont la plus grande partie de la population est composée d'émigrés d'Ontario.

Dans les derniers jours de Février, ces hommes prirent avec tous les sauvages du pays, surtout ceux de leurs environs, une attitude si menaçante que les Métis échelonnés sur la Rivière Assiniboine entre le Fort Garry et le Portage la Prairie, craignant pour leurs familles et leurs biens que leurs ennemis du Portage parlaient ouvertement de venir massacrer et brûler dans une descente nocturne, exigèrent du gouvernement Provisoire une protection immédiate. Leurs craintes paraissaient d'autant mieux fondées que, lors de la visite de pacification que Monsieur D. A. Smith avait eu la générosité de faire auprès des habitants du Portage, ces gens alors aussi dévoués au Dr. Schultz, qu'hostiles aux anciens colons, avaient écrit au Président du gouvernement Provisoire que pour obtenir la grâce de Boulton, ils se soumettraient, mais qu'ils se soulèveraient encore certainement à la première occasion. Pour la sécurité des citoyens, deux détachements de soldats Métis furent donc stationnés sur la Rivière Assiniboine, l'un au Fort de Monsieur Layne, à 24 milles du Fort Garry, et l'autre à la Baie St. Paul, dix milles plus loin.

Cependant l'audace de nos ennemis encouragée par notre patience était devenue extrême. Elle éclata jusque parmi les prisonniers de guerre que nous avions faits le 17 Février dans l'enceinte même du Fort Garry.

Il fallait mettre un terme à tout cela. Il fallait un châtiment pour en imposer aux conspirateurs et aux forcenés.

Au commencement de Décembre 1869 Th. Scott avait été emprisonné au Fort Garry, après que Monsieur McDougall nous eut déclaré la guerre, comme l'un des plus dangereux partisans de Dr. Schultz, de McDougall et de Dennis. Peu de temps après, Scott s'échappa de nos mains, et alla se réfugier au Portage la Prairie. Dans le mois de Février 1870, au moment même où la convention des 40 Délégués consolidait le gouvernement Provisoire, au nom de tout le peuple, Thomas Scott descendit du Portage, avec une bande d'hommes armés pour la révolte, lui, Scott, se montrant l'un des plus ardents, forçait sur une distance d'à

peu près 40 milles, nombre de citoyens paisibles à prendre malgré eux les armes et à le suivre.

Après avoir, lui et ses compagnons, ainsi recruté une centaine d'hommes jusqu'à la Paroisse de Headingley qui est située à 15 ou 16 milles à l'ouest du Fort Garry, sur la Rivière Assiniboine, ils poursuivirent leur marche le long de l'Assiniboine jusqu'au Fort Garry. Il n'y avait pas encore deux fois 24 heures que les représentants de tout le pays réunis en convention avaient définitivement établi le gouvernement Provisoire, que Scott révolté contre cette autorité, entraînait en appareil de guerre dans la ville de Winnipeg. A la tête de sa troupe, il chercha à s'emparer de la personne du Président du gouvernement Provisoire, cernant à cet effet une maison où le Président avait coutume de se trouver. Mais ne l'y ayant point surpris, ils allèrent rejoindre à St. André le rassemblement tumultueux de sauvages et de blancs dans lequel le Dr. Schultz faisait figurer son influence à un si haut degré. C'est là et par les personnes composant ce rassemblement que furent assassinés les malheureux Sutherland et Parisien.

Le 17 Février quand Boulton fut pris avec ses 47 hommes, les armes à la main sous les murs du Fort Garry, encore Scott était de ce nombre. Ainsi capturé pour la seconde fois, Scott dans sa prison ne laisse pas de se distinguer par la violence de sa conduite qui s'exagéra surtout le 1<sup>er</sup> de Mars. Ce jour-là, Th. Scott et M. McLeod forcèrent les portes de leur prison, se ruèrent sur les gardes, invitaient leurs compagnons à faire comme eux. Les Métis qui avaient toujours traité leurs prisonniers avec beaucoup d'égard, furent si indignés à la vue de ces outrages, qu'ils traînèrent Scott en dehors de l'établissement et allaient l'immoler, lorsqu'un de leurs représentants le déroba à leurs coups. Tous demandèrent que Scott fut traduit devant un conseil de guerre. Pense-t-on que Scott fût livré de suite à la cour martiale[?] Le Président du gouvernement Provisoire chercha à éviter cette extrémité, en faisant venir Scott devant lui. Il l'invita à se bien rendre compte de sa position, le priant, en quelque sorte, quelles que fussent ses convictions, de se taire et de se tenir tranquille dans sa prison; afin, dit la Président, qui j'ai cette raison d'empêcher que tu ne sois traduit devant le conseil de l'Adjudant Général comme les soldats Métis le demandent à grands cris.

Scott dédaigna tout et persista dans sa mauvaise conduite.

D'heure en heure, on s'attendait à voir surgir de nouveaux troubles. Ces troubles allaient mettre encore en jeu la vie des citoyens; ils tendaient à entraver le départ de nos délégués. Ils ne pouvaient manquer d'être favorables au Dr. Schultz qui, ne pouvant plus demeurer à la Rivière Rouge, se rendait à Ontario pour soulever les masses contre le gouvernement Provisoire, pour tâcher d'empêcher nos délégués d'être reçus officiellement par le gouvernement Canadien et pour tâcher de faire prevaloir à Ottawa une délégation du Nord ouest selon son choix.

Le 3 de mars nous fîmes comparaître Scott devant un tribunal de guerre. Il fut examiné sous témoignages assermentés, il fut convaincu et condamné à mort.

Le lendemain 4 Mars 1870, cette autorité de gouvernement qui nous avait été provisoirement confiée pour le bonheur d'une colonie anglaise et dont nous n'avions pendant trois mois de lutte acharnée, fait usage que pour désarmer nos ennemis, nous l'exerçâmes enfin dans toute sa sévérité. Scott fut exécuté, notre motif étant celui de faire triompher l'ordre et de remplir ainsi notre devoir en punissant un coupable.

Et maintenant, outre que le Canada n'a rien à faire légalement avec cette exécution, est-il raisonnable qu'il fasse retomber sur quelques particuliers ce qui a été le fait d'un gouvernement et qu'il traite en vils meurtriers les membres et les officiers d'un gouvernement dont la légalité est certaine, et avec lequel il a lui-même traité au vu et au su de tout le monde pendant presque toute une session du Parlement?

4 jours après l'exécution de Scott, Sa Grâce Monseigneur Taché arrivait aux [*sic*] milieux de nous. Mandé de Rome, entr'autres par le gouvernement Canadien, Monseigneur revenait dans le nord ouest, chargé par le Canada de travailler à une véritable entente entre les deux pays.

Sa Grâce réitéra donc auprès du Président du gouvernement Provisoire l'invitation du gouvernement Canadien d'envoyer des délégués à Ottawa.

Le pays était redevenu calme. Le 22 Mars le gouvernement Provisoire expédia ses délégués vers la capitale du Canada.

Chaque délégué reçut la lettre de créance qui voici :

Monsieur :

Le Président du gouvernement Provisoire d'Assiniboia, En Conseil, vous met par les présentes, en autorité et en délégation vous, Monsieur . . . , en compagnie de Messieurs . . . , afin qu vous vous dirigiez à Ottawa, en Canada, et que là vous placiez devant le gouvernement Canadien la liste qui contient les conditions et les propositions sous lesquelles le peuple d'Assiniboia consentirait à entrer en Confédération avec les autres Provinces du Canada.

Signé, ce 22ième jour de Mars, en l'an de notre [Seigneur] mille huit cent soixante et dix.

Par ordre.

Thomas Bunn,  
Secrétaire.

Siège du Gouvernement,  
Winnipeg,  
Assiniboia.

A l'arrivée de nos délégués à Ottawa, on sait comme Schultz, Mair, Lynch et autres tâchèrent de les accabler, en soulevant contre eux les préjugés de race et de religion. Le Dr. Lynch fut annoncé et poussé en avant comme le véritable délégué du Nord ouest. Mais en réalité, l'exécution de Scott, en rétablissant la paix, avait privé ces hommes de l'appui qu'ils avaient jusque-là trouvé dans nos

troubles, et elle avait rendu leur influence à Ottawa nulle. Aussi le Dr. Lynch ne fut point accepté comme délégué du nord ouest. Alors pour se dédommager de la ruine de leurs projets, nos ennemis s'efforcèrent de nous rendre fatale à nous mêmes l'exécution de Scott, et à cette fin ils ne cessèrent de lui prêter aux yeux de l'opinion publique des circonstances horribles et des motifs injustes. Ils entreprirent de détruire la force morale du gouvernement Provisoire lui-même, en faisant passer ses membres et ses soutiens pour des rebelles et des usurpateurs, et en représentant la mort de Scott comme une meurtre simplement exécrable.

Nos délégués furent indignement arrêtés et traînés devant les tribunaux. La promesse que les commissionnaires Canadiens nous avaient donnée au nom de leur gouvernement de les bien recevoir fut foulée aux pieds. Le gouvernement Provisoire et ses délégués firent entendre leurs justes protestations.

L'Angleterre manifesta au gouvernement Canadien le mécontentement qui lui causait l'arrestation de nos délégués.

D'un autre côté, Sa grâce Monseigneur Taché n'épargnait aucune fatigue, aucune peine pour faire connaître à tous les bienveillantes intentions de la couronne à l'égard des habitants du Nord ouest.

Durant tous nos troubles, nous avons toujours été remplis d'espoir que si nos humbles réclamations arrivaient jusqu'au trône de Sa Majesté, Elle ne nous laisserait pas écraser. Aussi faisons-nous flotter avec confiance le drapeau Britannique au dessus de nos têtes. La généreuse conduite que l'Angleterre venait en effet de prendre vis-à-vis de nous et les assurances si respectables que notre archévêque nous donnait au sujet des arrangements que nous ferions avec le Canada, nous engagèrent, nonobstant l'outrage fait à nos délégués, à ne pas changer notre disposition de traiter avec le gouvernement Canadien.

Sur ces entrefaites, le gouvernement Provisoire avait obtenu l'avantage d'être reconnu dans toute la terre de Rupert et le nord ouest par la Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson elle-même.

En arrivant à Ottawa, nos délégués, malgré les embarras qu'on leur suscita, avaient écrit comme suit au Secrétaire d'Etat pour les Provinces, l'Honorable Jos. Howe.

Ottawa, 23 Avril 1870.

A L'Honorable Secrétaire d'Etat etc.

Joseph Howe.

Monsieur :

Les sous-signés, délégués du nord ouest, désirant retarder le moins possible les affaires de leur mission, ont l'honneur de vous prier de vouloir bien informer le gouvernement de son Excellence, qu'ils désirent être entendus le plus tôt possible.

Alfred Scott

John Black

J. N. Ritchot



Le 26 Avril, l'Honorable Joseph Howe, Secrétaire d'Etat, etc. avait répondu à nos délégués de la manière suivante :

Ottawa, 26 Avril, 1870.

Messieurs,

Je dois accuser réception de votre lettre du 22 courant, annonçant que comme délégués du Nord ouest auprès du gouvernement de la Puissance du Canada, vous désirez avoir le plus tôt possible une audience du gouvernement, et en réponse j'ai à vous informer que l'Honorable Sir John A. McDonald [*sic*] et l'Honorable Sir George Etienne Cartier ont été autorisés par le gouvernement à traiter avec vous le sujet de votre mission et ils seront prêts à vous recevoir à 11 heures.

J'ai l'honneur d'être

Messieurs

Votre très obéissant serviteur,

Joseph Howe.

Au Révérend J. N. Ritchot,

John Black, écr.

A. H. Scott, écr.

Les négociations s'ouvrirent à l'heure indiquée entre les délégués du gouvernement Canadien et ceux du gouvernement Provisoire.

La première condition du traité proposée par les délégués du nord ouest a été qu' " après les arrangements une amnistie générale serait de toute nécessité proclamée dans le nord ouest, avant que le Canada ne prit possession de ces territoires." J'ignore si le Canada a jamais pensé sérieusement que cette condition de l'amnistie a été posée par nos délégués au gouvernement Canadien comme condition *sine qua non*. Il est vrai que notre dévouement à la confédération elle-même l'à dispensé de faire attention à cela. Mais qu'on me permette de le dire, la justice demande qu'il s'en occupe.

J'ai dit que les délégués du gouvernement Canadien acceptèrent la condition de l'amnistie. En effet, Sir John A. et Sir George Etienne répondirent à nos délégués qu'il était de la nature même de l'arrangement amical qui avait lieu entre les deux pays, que cette amnistie générale fût proclamée comme ils le demandaient. Ils ajoutèrent que bien que la proclamation de cette amnistie fut de la Prérogative Royale, ils étaient cependant en mesure d'assurer aux délégués du Nord ouest que cette amnistie serait certainement proclamée.

Le très Honorable Sir John Young, depuis Lord Lisgar, [et] Sir Clinton Murdoch, délégué à Ottawa par la couronne pour y faire connaître ses volontés au sujet des difficultés du nord ouest donnèrent aussi péremptoirement à nos délégués l'assurance que cette amnistie serait proclamée à la satisfaction des habitants du nord ouest.

Néanmoins nos délégués firent remarquer à Son Excellence qu'ils seraient

heureux d'avoir par écrit cette promesse d'amnistie. Son Excellence répliqua que la chose ne souffrait [*sic*] aucune difficulté, et que cela serait fait aussitôt que le Parlement aurait sanctionné le reste des arrangements.

Les députés du gouvernement Canadien et du gouvernement Provisoire composèrent le bill de Manitoba.

Pendant ce temps-là, le gouvernement Impérial jugea à propos d'envoyer des soldats réguliers dans ses territoires du nord ouest. C'était son droit et son devoir. Et nous étions contents de voir enfin arriver les troupes de la Métropole pour assurer au milieu de nous les fonctions de gouvernement.

Mais quelle ne fut pas notre surprise de voir le Canada prendre le droit de nous envoyer aussi une expédition militaire, pendant les difficultés qu'il avait avec nous et sans avoir conclu avec nous aucun arrangement.

Le Président du Gouvernement Provisoire se plaignait auprès de Sa Grâce Monseigneur Taché, de l'injustice de la conduite et des prétensions du Canada vis-à-vis de nous. Et il déclara à Sa Grâce qu'en autant que l'expédition de Wolseley était canadienne, elle verrait se fermer devant elle notre pays, aussi long temps qu'une entente amicale ne serait pas définitivement conclue entre le gouvernement Canadien et le gouvernement Provisoire, et tant que nous n'aurions pas les garanties [*sic*] d'une amnistie générale.

Monseigneur condamna de toute son autorité cette attitude de notre part. Mais sur la remarque que nous fîmes à sa Grâce que nous nous défendions avec justice, Monseigneur invoquant son pouvoir de commissionnaire Canadien nous dit: Ne faites pas cela. Je vous donne ma parole d'honneur qu'une amnistie générale sera proclamée avant l'installation d'aucun Lieutenant Gouverneur Canadien ici.

Au reste, le gouvernement Impérial avait enjoint au Canada de ne faire partir aucun de ses milices pour le nord ouest, avant que les députés de ce pays ne fussent satisfaits.

Les chambres à Ottawa, ayant passé l'acte de Manitoba, nos députés insistèrent auprès du gouvernement Canadien pour avoir alors écrit de la convention déjà faite au sujet de l'amnistie. Son Excellence le gouverneur général répondit qu'Elle ne croyait pas qu'il y eut rien au monde de plus sûr que la parole même d'un représentant de Sa Majesté, que cette Parole lui-même l'avait engagée en faveur de l'amnistie, que les habitants du nord ouest auraient cette amnistie et qu'elle serait rendu dans le nord ouest avant les députés eux-mêmes.

Nos députés revinrent au Fort Garry le 17 Juin 1870. Le 24 du même mois, le gouvernement Provisoire, ayant réuni la chambre des représentants du peuple, se fit rendre compte, dans une séance publique, des arrangements faits avec le Canada, par nos députés.

Le traité se composait de deux choses fort distinctes. 1<sup>o</sup> de la constitution politique d'une partie considérable des territoires du nord ouest, comme Province indépendante dans la Confédération : c'était l'acte même de Manitoba. 2<sup>o</sup> du règlement définitif de toutes les difficultés passées par la proclamation très

prochaine d'une amnistie générale, qui avait été garantie [*sic*] à notre délégation comme je viens de le faire connaître.

Nous avions fait avec le gouvernement Canadien des arrangements si favorables que la chambre des représentants du nord ouest vota sans aucune opposition notre consentement d'entrer dans la confédération. Et le gouvernement Provisoire par son Secrétaire d'Etat, Thomas Bunn, notifia de ce fait, l'Honorable Joseph Howe, Secrétaire d'Etat pour les Provinces. Le document portait que nous consentions à nous confédérer avec le Canada, parce que nous avions dans l'acte de Manitoba les principes pour lesquels nous avions combattu et parce qu'une amnistie générale ne devait pas tarder à être proclamée.

Sa Grâce Monseigneur Taché porta cette importante pièce officielle aux autorités à Ottawa.

Il faut remarquer ici que déjà le gouverneur général avait négligé d'accomplir l'assurance qu'il avait donnée à nos Délégués que l'amnistie précéderait leur arrivée dans le nord ouest.

Cependant le 15 Juillet 1870, le transfert de la terre de Rupert et des territoires du Nord ouest fut fait au gouvernement Canadien.

Pour terminer les arrangements, nos délégués avaient averti les délégués du gouvernement Canadien de faire savoir à leur gouvernement que les membres et les officiers du gouvernement Provisoire voulaient être déchargés de la responsabilité de gouverner, aussitôt après que le transfert aurait été opéré. Mais comme là-dessus, l'Honorable Ministre de la milice et de la défense, Sir George Etienne Cartier avait insisté auprès de nos délégués en disant : Que Riel et Son Conseil continuent à maintenir la paix après le transfert dans Manitoba et le nord ouest, jusqu'à l'arrivée du Lieutenant gouverneur. Nous nous devouâmes à cette tâche. Depuis le 15 Juillet 1870 jusqu'à 24 du mois d'Août suivant nous gouvernâmes, dans l'intérêt du Canada, sa Province de Manitoba et ses territoires du nord ouest. Cet espace de temps écoulé, le Colonel Wolseley arriva au Fort Garry. Au lieu de se présenter amicalement, comme le droit des gens lui en faisait un devoir, son arrivée fut celle d'un ennemi. Le Vice-Président du gouvernement Provisoire, Monsieur F. X. Dauphinais, et Messieurs F. X. Pagée et Pierre Poitras, deux des représentants du peuple, qui, le 24 Juin auparavant, avaient voté amicalement en faveur de notre entrée dans la Confédération, suivaient paisiblement la route qui mène à leurs demeures. Wolseley les fait arrêter violemment et traîner en prison. L'un d'eux, P. Poitras, un vieillard, fut maltraité par les soldats du Colonel Wolseley jusqu'à recevoir des blessures graves.

Après avoir ainsi pris possession du Fort Garry que nous avions laissé libre devant le représentant de Sa Majesté, Wolseley dans un discours public, se félicita lui avec ses troupes d'*avoir mis en fuite* les bandits de Riel. Voilà les expressions dont il se servait pour qualifier le Président du gouvernement Provisoire et tous ses soutiens. Quelques jours plus tard arriva le Lieutenant gouverneur Canadien. Mais il ne prit les rênes du gouvernement de notre pays que

pour consommer l'acte de perfidie insigne dont le Canada nous faisait les victimes. Il s'installa sans remplir la condition *sine qua non* de l'amnistie.

Ainsi le gouvernement Canadien a rompu dès le commencement le traité solennel qu'il a fait avec le gouvernement Provisoire.

De plus le gouvernement Canadien nous a fait faire des propositions amicales par le Vicaire Général le Révérend J. B. Thibeault et par Monsieur le colonel de Salaberry. Et quand nous avons eu [?] accepté son amitié, il s'est moqué de nous.

Il s'est moqué des assurances publiques formelles et spontanées d'amnistie qu'il nous a données, dans le mois de Janvier 1870, par la bouche de Monsieur D. A. Smith maintenant surintendant de l'Honorable Compagnie de la Baie d'Hudson, dans Manitoba et le nord ouest.

Il s'est aussi moqué de sa parole d'honneur qu'il nous a donnée spontanément en faveur d'une amnistie, dans le mois de mai 1870, par la bouche de Sa Grâce, le dévoué Archevêque de St. Boniface.

La Confédération Canadienne pour Manitoba et le nord ouest est donc une supercherie.

Il y a trois ans et demi que cet état de choses existe. Mais les anciens habitants de la terre de Rupert et du nord ouest n'ont jamais cessé de réclamer ce qui leur appartient, ce que le gouvernement canadien leur doit à tant de titres. Et aujourd'hui plus que jamais ils le réclament avec force. Ce que nous demandons c'est l'amnistie : c'est l'exécution loyale de l'acte de Manitoba.

LOUIS RIEL

#### XXXII : L'ABBÉ DUGAS, HISTOIRE VERIDIQUE, CHAPTER XIII, PP. 191-4

Le 23 août Mgr. Taché arrivait d'Ottawa, et allait immédiatement au Fort Garry assurer le gouvernement provisoire que la mission de Wolseley était toute pacifique. Le soir du 23 août, Riel vint dire à l'évêque de Saint-Boniface que les troupes étaient arrivées au bas de la Rivière-Rouge et qu'elles seraient au Fort le lendemain matin de très bonne heure. Monseigneur n'en voulait rien croire. C'est impossible, disait-il, qu'il en soit ainsi ; les soldats ne seront pas ici avant quinze jours, on me l'a assuré à Ottawa.

Monseigneur, lui dit Riel, on vous a trompé du commencement à la fin, les soldats sont ici tout près ; on veut nous surprendre, et pour cela toutes les issues sont fermées, les éclaireurs qu'on envoie de ce côté sont gardés prisonniers.

Tout le monde était en émoi à Saint-Boniface, à Winnipeg et au Fort.

Riel, convaincu de l'immense danger que couraient les siens, renvoya tout son monde durant la nuit ; cependant, il persista à demeurer dans le fort avec O'Donoghue.

Le 24 au matin, un colon anglais arrivait à course de cheval dire à Riel : Pour l'amour de Dieu, sauvez-vous ; les troupes ne sont qu'à deux milles de la ville et vous allez être massacrés. Il n'eut que juste le temps de traverser à Saint-Boniface ;



pour éviter d'être poursuivi de près, il coupa la corde qui retenait le bateau traversier.

Sa première parole en rentrant à l'évêché fut celle-ci :

Venez voir, Monseigneur, les soldats qui arrivent au Fort, le croyez-vous maintenant? Il ne me reste plus qu'à monter à cheval et m'enfuir de l'autre côté des frontières.

Accompagné de deux fidèles métis, bien armés, il partit par le côté est de la rivière pour se rendre à Pembina, afin d'échapper aux investigations de Wolseley.

En partant il se consola en disant : n'importe ce qui arrivera maintenant, les droits des métis sont assurés par le Bill de Manitoba ; c'est ce que j'ai voulu — Ma mission est finie.

Ici en effet, s'est terminée la mission de Riel dans le soulèvement de 1870, et l'on peut dire qu'elle fut providentielle.

Sans la résistance des métis au gouvernement canadien, jamais les droits des minorités n'eussent été écrits dans la Constitution du pays, et peut-être ne resterait-il plus rien, au Nord-Ouest, de l'élément français.



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